

# TEEVADHARA

A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION

## NATIONALIZATION AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

HOW DID THE QUESTION OF NATIONALIZATION CROP UP, IN INDIA?

*Constantine Manalel*

THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO SECULAR EDUCATION

*K. M. Tharakan*

THE CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION TO MORAL-RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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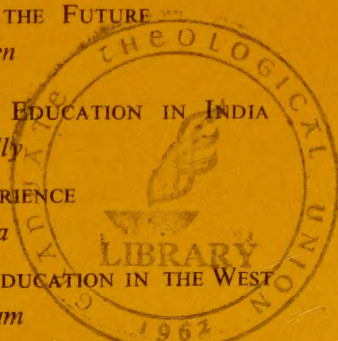
*Sebastian Poonolly*

THE CEYLONESE EXPERIENCE

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STATE CONTROL AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE WEST

*Ignatius Puthiadam*



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# JEEVADHARA

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# The Problem of Man

**NATIONALIZATION AND  
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

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# JEEVADHARA

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# How did the Question of Nationalization Crop up, in India?

(EDITORIAL)

Considering the tense atmosphere prevailing in Kerala consequent upon the recent education tussle between the management of private colleges and the state government, we have had to pluck up courage to discuss this question in the first issue of *Jeevadhara*, 1973. True to the objective we had set before ourselves at the outset we have dared to deal with a live issue. The educational question is not just a slight headache and heart-burning to the Christian community, and it is high time that it was discussed at some length and our stand re-examined. Most of what follows in this article consists of observations made and knowledge gained from personal experience of work among students and teachers throughout the State during the past twenty years. Recent scientific surveys<sup>1</sup> have confirmed many of the conclusions reached here. Though what is said here strictly applies to Kerala much of it is true of the rest of India as well.

There was a time when the whole country was all praise for the educational efforts of Christians in India: for their pioneering ability, selfless service, spirit of commitment and devotion to human values. The name is legion of eminent men

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1. Cf. *The Christian College in Developing India - a Socio-Logical Survey*, Richard D. N. Dickinson, Oxford University Press, (1971; pp. 30-32, 50-53, 69-154, 156-162, 171-173, 178-179, 182-186, 211-213, 244-253; *The Christian College and National Development*, published for ISS-FERES Project by The Christian Literature Society, Madras (1967). Also *Jesuit Survey* (private) of the Society's schools and colleges (1969); *Report of the Methodist Educational Survey, 1968-1971*, ed. by M. Elia Peter and Donald E. Rugh, and published by Council of Christian Education, Jabalpur, M. P.; *Survey* (1967) of the Protestant Colleges by the United Board for Christian Higher Education.



and responsible leaders who made public statements of their esteem and appreciation. Christian as well as non-Christian parents were insistent on sending their children to Christian institutions because these were believed to impart real *education*, not merely *instruction*.

Today the picture is quite different. There are still Christian institutions to which non-Christian parents and even communist ministers send their children in preference to any others. But now the former spirit of insistence is rarely present and praise is seldom heard. Christian educational efforts are still recognized, but not as widely and whole-heartedly as in the past. No one doubts that some of our Christian schools and colleges are among the best in the country and most of them are perhaps comparatively better than many that are run by other agencies, but in themselves they are far from being ideal. Voices crying down every private institution have begun to be heard and they are growing louder and more frequent than any voice of praise.

### 1. Christians v. government

Deterioration of Christian education had already set in before Independence. Under the British rule Christians were a privileged community. They had better educational facilities and greater opportunities for employment. Though their forbears were pioneers in starting schools with Indian languages as the medium of instruction and in developing vernacular literatures, they co-operated with the government in the promotion of western education through English. Thus they were also instrumental along with the government in creating in India "a new caste or class, the English educated class, which lived in a world of its own, cut off from the mass of population, and looked always even when protesting, towards its rulers."<sup>2</sup> Though our schools and colleges have produced eminent men, they are still engaged in the creation of a middle class of selfish government officials, paltry politicians and unscrupulous business men, whereas they could have been centres to serve the masses in many ways and politicize them. A sizable number of Christians belonged to the middle class; and even after Independence, wittingly or

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2. *The Discovery of India*, Jawaharlal Nehru, 4th edition, Meridian Books Ltd, London, 1956, pp. 413-414.



unwittingly, unconscious of the decolonialization process which always follows newly-obtained freedom, these continued to hunger after the flesh-pots of Egypt. With the mushroom growth of schools and colleges after Independence, Christians seem to have lost all pioneering ability in the field of education and most of their institutions are drifting along the path of conformity to the general pattern. Government grants and loans to ensure the financial soundness of institutions were an incentive to such servile conformity. It has been an experience here as elsewhere that the ownership and management of schools and colleges have made Christians, especially priests and religious, a conservative force, least susceptible to any change from the *status quo*. Private managements on the whole were not very happy about the switch-over to the vernacular as medium of instruction or the policy of extending free education further and further. No wonder if liberal politicians and progressive thinkers have dubbed the Church reactionary.

There was a cogent reason why politicians forced themselves into the educational field and tried to take control of educational institutions. The Church in Kerala, if not in India as a whole, has not been exempt from the spirit of acquisitiveness which is a counter-sign of the kingdom of God. With a few commendable exceptions, dioceses and religious congregations and even provinces within the same congregation, have been multiplying their institutions of different kinds, especially schools and colleges, glorying in them, giving them wide publicity and attracting foreign funds, sometimes by misrepresenting their needs and even going to the extent of sponsoring interests which are the concern of fellow groups. Through wealth and power thus acquired they wield extraordinary influence over political parties and the government. Eventually other major communities follow suit. The political parties and the government, as we should expect, would like to be rid of what they regard as a constant threat to their security, so the more robust of them, now and then, have made attempts to take over control of education. This circumstance has to be reckoned with when we speak of the eruption of political parties into our schools and colleges. Moreover, there is another side to the question. We have no government of the people for the people, but only of the party for the party. Such self-interested parties use students as political

tools and consequently our schools and colleges have disintegrated into so many warring groups. It is high time that the whole country rose as one man to demand a complete ban on political parties in educational institutions, while, at the same time, we should be so circumspect as to give no occasion, on our part, for their infiltration or interference.

## 2. Christians v. other communities

Christians should understand that the trend towards social control of education is part of the decolonializing process though it is also due to the secularizing process. During the colonial period one or other community was favoured by the colonialists as against another. After Independence those communities that were not so favoured or organized have had recourse to the State for their educational facilities. As they could not run schools themselves they wanted the State to do so for them and the State funds to be more equitably distributed. This could hardly be called communalism. At the same time communalists and politicians perhaps had their own interests in joining hands with them, and demanding justice for all.

It was the Christians who threw open the portals of their institutions to the backward communities when educational facilities were denied to them by the higher castes even in government institutions. By admitting members of all communities to their schools they have contributed not a little to communal harmony in this country. Unfortunately the Christian community, especially in Kerala, has by now become as communalistic as any other community, with groups within groups based on caste and colour, rite and language, all having their conflicting interests. Even the administrative divisions and subdivisions in one and the same church or religious congregation are turned in upon themselves and sometimes sealed off from one another. They vie among themselves for the first place as to the number of institutions they possess and start new ones whether these are necessary or not, sometimes so close to each other as to create problems for themselves and be a scandal to outsiders. What is more, there have been instances, in some Christian schools and colleges, of dishonesty, favouritism, nepotism and other kinds of corruption, though, perhaps, very much less than in other educational institutions and in government departments. Thus instead of

being the leaven of society, the Christian community has been withdrawing into herself and behaving like one among many self-contained communities. Hence other communities have not been able to see eye to eye with them in their dogged insistence on the continuance of private-owned schools and colleges. The Christians have yet to understand that the more they try to obtain under cover of 'minority rights', the more they become isolated from society at large, and that religious or 'fundamental' rights cannot be identified with greater social advantages to themselves.

### 3. Teachers in Christian institutions

Many of the Christian managements have long since forgotten the fact that the success of education depends on the co-operation and harmonious working together of all educational agencies. Generally speaking, in place of team work there was, till very recently, a kind of employer-employee mentality in the relations of managements and teachers. Again, the management, especially in catholic schools and colleges, gave preference to the clergy and to religious, in the matter of appointments and promotions, to the disadvantage of the laity. The number of priests and religious working in our educational institutions is quite out of proportion to the size of the community. The Catholic Church in India engages about 14,000 of its 37,500 sisters, 1000 of its 2272 brothers, and 2000 of its 9,211 priests as full-timers in education, many of whom, the laity think, could well be replaced by them. Moreover, the higher salaries that the teachers now receive direct from the government have been the outcome of continued agitation through their own associations. As a consequence many teachers in Christian institutions have been estranged from the management and would favour the take-over of private schools and colleges by the government.

All the same they are not right in all their assumptions. There is some justification after all, for the preference shown in the appointment of priests and religious; with the sinking of large sums of money into the establishment some managements often find it very hard to pay the full salary to all their teachers. On the other hand, staff recruited from among the clergy and the religious could be asked to forgo a part of it and thus enable the institution to balance its budget. It also cannot be taken



for granted that all teachers live up to the duties of their profession. Many have grown callous and have lost that sense of dedication and commitment for which the Christian institutions were once conspicuous.

#### 4. Students in Christian institutions

An essential element in education should be the training of students in responsible freedom. But in many Christian institutions students, until recently, hardly enjoyed such freedom, — that joyous freedom taught by the Gospel. They had no share in decision-making in matters pertaining to them. Christian schools have been fortresses of traditionalism, where there was little place for creativity. It is no wonder that the great majority of students were in favour of a step which promised them freedom, and therefore acquiesced in a government take-over of private schools and colleges. One should only expect political parties to make capital out of this.

There is a youth movement, the world over, sincerely committed to profound human values, such as freedom, social justice, human solidarity and world peace. Its echoes are clearly heard in this country. Youth are often driven to desperate attempts to break through the *status quo* and pull down the structures of unfreedom. But their aberrations and excesses frequently ending in vandalism and violence are so numerous that the primary objectives are often lost sight of and immediate ends are sought. According to a report given recently in Parliament by the education minister, Mr Nurul Hasan, there were as many as 4,136 instances of student unrest in the last six months of which 1,365 resulted in outbreaks of serious trouble. The causes of unrest were 'regional, linguistic, parochial and chauvinistic' and had nothing to do with academic problems.<sup>3</sup> Those engaged in education do not seem to appreciate the sincerity and high idealism behind these aberrations, at least in the more intellectual of the students. Youth if well directed could be the best instruments of social changes which their elders have failed to effect. But they have become estranged.

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3. *The Indian Express*, Dec. 19, 1972.



## 5. Christian education in Christian schools and colleges

Most Christian schools and colleges have long since abandoned Christian education. The education imparted in them is almost as non-religious as in government institutions. Most of the managements have curious views of Christian education itself. It consists, it would seem, in teaching catechism, holding an annual retreat and distributing holy communion at the close of it. After Independence in the feverish and indiscriminate multiplication of educational institutions even catechism has been neglected in most schools and colleges though some of the latter were intended to be eventually 'catholic universities'! But whenever there was talk of social or state control of education, the managements of these very institutions were vociferous about their right to teach religion to their students and sought protection under 'minority rights'. The people are becoming disillusioned and sceptical about their claims.

## 6. Turning the trend away from nationalization

In spite of all that has been said we Christians, through our educational institutions, can still do a great service to the nation and make a significant contribution to education. Perhaps the country is not, at present, in a position to take over all private schools and run them efficiently. When political parties make a great hue and cry about nationalization of education they seem to be after some kind of state control under cover of this plea. We would suggest that all our educational efforts in future should be concentrated on making every school and college of ours

i. *a community of love.* No communalists, no political parties, no government, would grudge or envy an institution wholly inspired by Christ's love, embracing all and expressed in deeds. In such a community no ghetto mentality would be fostered, and there would be no discrimination against any member on grounds of religion or class. There would be provision for moral and religious instruction (which is often the moot point) to members of all denominations and religions by their respective co-religionists. Schooling would not be equated with mere teaching, but equally with the fostering and practice of love for one another. This love should extend to the *environs* of the

institution and beyond, to the farthest limit possible, so that an *open* community is formed with the neighbourhood. All possible services by all sections of the institution from educating the backward to performing the humblest chores needed in the locality, should be included in the curriculum and be a part of schooling.

ii. *an academic community.* Its main concern would be the development and exercise of the mind through dialogue and discussion. Students should be trained to think for themselves: to examine critically every proposition and discern true from false argument; to see, judge and act on their own. Teaching should mainly be an introduction to, and a preparation for, discussion on carefully prepared questionnaires. Teachers badly need special training in this kind of work.

### 7. A good start

It would be an excellent start to declare a complete moratorium on admissions and appointments based on caste or colour or creed, rite, group or diocese. Merit alone should count, but this is conditional on a thorough overhauling of our examination system which, at present, gives no indication of merit at all. Secondly, the control of the Church as an *institution* on schools and colleges should be loosened and give way to social control. The Church in India has yet to become a *servant* church and shed its spirit of possessiveness. How difficult this is can be realized from the story of the rich young man in the Gospel whom Christ advised to give away all and follow him.

### The Plan of the Issue

In this number of *Jeevadhara* we continue the discussion with the Christian contribution to (1) secular education and (2) moral religious education. There follows a critical review of the present position of Christian education. The issue of nationalization of education is considered under two aspects, the sociological and the theological. Next there are some speculations on the possible future of education in India.

In the 'Bulletin' section we have a broad survey of the history of education in India, followed by another on the factors leading to the nationalization of schools in Sri Lanka and the consequences of this step, which will be a lesson to us. After this comes a study on state control and Christian education in the West. This is followed by book reviews.

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# The Christian Contribution to Secular Education

The pioneers in the educational field of modern India were the Christian missionaries from the West<sup>1</sup>. The first to start schools on Indian soil were the catholic missionaries in the French and Portuguese colonial outposts of India<sup>2</sup>. And then the Danish missionaries came. The schools they started in the Madras Province set the pattern for the educational institutions that were soon to spring up in different parts of the country. At first the medium of instruction in the schools was the native language. It was the missionaries from the West who codified the grammar of most of the native languages of India, and compiled dictionaries in them giving them a sound footing and a solid structure. "They even laboured at the dialects of the primitive hill and forest tribes and reduced them to writing."<sup>3</sup> Their attempt to translate the Bible into the various Indian languages led to their growth and enrichment. Their literary efforts in the vernaculars were none the less fruitful. There are, for example, the services that Gundert and Bailey did to Malayalam and the contributions made to Tamil by Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg. The efforts of Henry Martin to develop Urdu and of William Carey to enrich Bengali were equally commendable. The missionaries did not stop with starting schools or translating the Bible into the Indian Languages; they started printing-presses of their own to publish books in the vernacular language as well as in English. In *The Discovery of India* Nehru pays tributes to the pioneering work in this field of printing done by the Serampore Baptist Mission. Though the prime aim of the missionaries Carey, Marshman and Ward was to preach the word to the Indians, their work in the field of education was appreciated by one and all. They opened their first school, a vernacular institution, in Serampore, in 1818, under the

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1. 'The Role of Christian Colleges' by Cardinal Gracias in "*The Christian College and National Development*", p. 22
  2. *Asian Drama* by Gunnar Myrdal, pp. 1637-1640
  3. *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru, p. 318



protection of, and with a charter from, the king of Denmark. At first the missionaries who opened schools for Indians met with stiff opposition from the East India Company which feared that education would disturb the people of India and make them less docile<sup>4</sup>. But this was not to be so for long. The British Government took over power from the East India Company. It was Charles Grant who suggested that the Christian schools should use English as the medium of instruction in the Indian schools<sup>5</sup>. Grant hoped that English education would improve the intellectual and moral quality of the Hindus and lead them to embrace Christianity. Later when the British Government made English the medium of instruction, they intended only to give the Hindus and Muslims proper training to serve their government<sup>6</sup>. At this stage the missionaries changed the medium in their schools to English, started new English schools and not long afterwards, opened colleges as well. Their motive, unlike that of the British Government, was basically humanitarian.

It is edifying to observe how when the East India Company was shamelessly exploiting the resources of India, for its own benefit, the missionaries ceaselessly toiled to uplift the masses. Many were the services they rendered to eradicate the various superstitious practices and customs that had been infesting the Indian people from time out of mind. Education for long had been denied to the lower classes and castes including the Sudras and also to women. It was due to the efforts of the missionaries that the doors of educational institutions were flung open to all alike without discriminations of caste, colour and sex. They inspired the social reformers and the government to discourage child marriage, polygamy and polyandry, to promote the education of the young, to encourage widow re-marriage and to effect the liberation of society from caste fetters. In this context it is worth recalling the social reforms initiated by Pandit Ramabhai, Narayan Varma Telak, Sadhu Sunder Singh, Nehemia Gorch and

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4. 'Christian Education in India' in *'Not without a Compass'*, p. 4

5. *Ibid*, p, 4

6. 'The Role of Christian Colleges' by Cardinal Gracias in *The Christian College and National Development*, p. 25;  
'Education and National Objectives' by Rev T. A. Mathias, in *Educational Perspectives in Modern India*.

others<sup>7</sup>. Love burned in them as they worked with unremitting zeal to uplift their fellowmen. Printing presses, publishing houses, schools, colleges, hospitals and orphanages, were different channels opened by the missionaries to reach the Indian mind. Of these the schools and medical missions were productive of immediate results.

The story of the growth and development of the primary schools started by the missionaries into high schools and shrines of higher education is both thrilling and elevating. The capital to start these schools and colleges was donated by foreign missions, the teachers in these institutions were experienced and credited men dedicated to their work. The atmosphere they maintained in their institutions was one of Christian love. Charity was their watchword; they were never weary of doing good. When the British Government took over power from the East India Company and introduced English education, the missionaries started a few more schools in the different provinces of India and strove to fulfil their lofty ideals in developing these institutions<sup>8</sup>. In 1857, the universities of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay came into existence. Most of the celebrated colleges affiliated to these universities were run by foreign missions. Madras Christian College (1837), St Joseph's College, Tiruchirapalli (1844), St John's College, Agra (1858), St Xavier's College, Bombay (1869), Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow (1870), St Stephen's College, Delhi (1881) and Ludhiana Medical College (1894) are some of the illustrious edifices of learning which have been steadily supplying efficient and enlightened leadership to our country over the years<sup>9</sup>. It was during this period that the great-hearted protestant missionaries Carey, Marshman and Ward, and the great humanist Jesuits of the Catholic Church vied with each other in the building of outstanding educational institutions in India.

The system they worked out opened new horizons before the human mind and enlarged the human heart. It inculcated in

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7. 'Christians' by Jamila Varghese in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*. Annual - 1972, p. 94
  8. 'The Role of Christian Colleges' by Cardinal Gracias in *The Christian College and National Development*, p. 22
  9. 'Christian Education' in *Not without a Compass*.

the minds of the young a high sense of values. The education was both liberal and secular. It freed the mind of the young from the structures of rigorous religious canons and time-old traditions. In an essay *Private Enterprise and Christian Education*, M. M. Balaguer rightly points out that there were at least five great objectives achieved by the educational institutions<sup>10</sup> started by the missionaries. First they taught that human dignity must be respected. Secondly they cultivated a social sense in their students. Thirdly they established the code that one should treat others as one expected to be treated by them. Fourthly they enjoined upon the authorities of public institutions that they should look upon the power they enjoyed as a sacred trust. Fifthly they taught youth the need of the rule of law to prevent anarchy. Above all, it became accepted through them that what sanctified human relations was the bond of the brotherhood of man. The missionaries, it should be borne in mind, called the untouchables of India 'the children of God', long before Gandhiji gave currency to this view by describing them as 'Harijans'.

The greatest contribution of christians to secular education was the fillip they gave to the restoration of the human dignity of every Indian as well as to the spiritual revival of India as a whole. As J. R. Macphail observes the spirit that inspired and animated the christian pioneers in the educational field of India was the love of Jesus, who died on the cross<sup>11</sup>. To them the Son of Man was the supreme measure of the true and the good. Even today it is the life-giving light of calvary that enlightens the great educational institutions run by christian agencies.

Shri J. P. Naik, Secretary of the Kothari Commission, pays glowing tribute to the christian contribution to secular education.<sup>12</sup> He points out that it was the christian missionaries and educationists who taught that man's supreme duty is to serve his fellowmen. Those responsible for the management of christian

10. 'Private Enterprise and Christian Education' by M. M. Balaguer in *Educational Perspectives in Modern India*, p. 240

11. *Ibid*, p. 218

12. 'Private Enterprise in Education' by Shri J. P. Naik in *The Christian College and National Development*, p. 135

institutions were men of charity, the teachers who worked there were men of integrity and character, and the education imparted by them stressed human dignity and freedom. Shri Naik writes:

"So far as selling the christian religion is concerned, your work is not commendable, but in selling commitment to social service, commitment to education, that work has been simply wonderful. And many non-christians who are working today in non-christian institutions, who have been students of your institutions, have caught the spirit of service, the spirit of commitment in their training – that has been a very major contribution. After all, you cannot achieve anything worthwhile in education unless the teachers are committed to education. Now this commitment to education has two sources. It comes from the commitment to scholarship which is a good thing. But when it comes from a stronger motive like service to society or religion or God, I think the commitment is raised to an entirely different level altogether and such commitment is what you have been able to achieve for a number of years and to communicate to others."

There is no gainsaying the fact that the high traditions set up by the dedicated christian teachers will be the main source of inspiration to generations of Indian teachers to come. They had the genius to experiment with, and evolve new methods of teaching and training the young according to the needs of the time. Shri Naik also points out that English education awakened India to the needs of the time in so far as it combined in itself the achievement of both science and religion.

When we estimate the christian contributions we have to take into consideration the quantitative output as much as its quality. In the essay cited above J. P. Naik shows that till 1854 the educational institutions were mostly run by the missionaries<sup>13</sup>. After 1852 the missionaries did not think of expansion any further, rather they concentrated on helping the existing institutions maintain high standards of excellence. It is evident that the British Government was not keen on starting new educational institutions in the public sector in the period between 1854 and 1947. Hence the development of private enterprise was steady and uninterrupted during this period. None could excel the missionaries in creating

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13. 'The Role of Christian Colleges' by Cardinal Gracias, p. 27



in schools an atmosphere congenial to education, in maintaining the highest standards of excellence there and in throwing open their portals to one and all irrespective of caste distinctions. The non-christian agencies who entered the field looked upon the christian institutions as their models.

When India attained independence, the government of India accepted in principle a responsibility to educate the people. But it did not have enough money to undertake the starting of schools and colleges in sufficient number all over the country. Even now the situation has not changed substantially. Huge amounts have been invested by private agencies in constructing the buildings of educational institutions and in furnishing them adequately. The number of christian colleges and schools is out of all proportion to the christian population of India. Some statistics from *The Catholic Directory of India*, 1972, give us a picture of the christian contribution to secular education. Catholics alone have 4,957 Lower Primary Schools with pupils numbering 970,316, 2,918 Upper Primary and High Schools with 1,382,772 pupils, 123 Training Schools with 6,526 pupils, besides 211 Technical Institutions with 15,426 pupils, and 114 University Colleges with 110,246 students.

The exact statistics of non-catholic christian institutions are not available. Fr T. A. Mathias seems rightly to infer that the number of educational institutions run by non-catholic christian agencies may come to about half the number of catholic institutions<sup>14</sup>. This means that the christians who form only 2.5% of India's population have taken up the responsibility of educating 3.5 millions of India's children and youth. Half of this number consists of non-christians. On the whole there are 176 christian colleges in India where at least 155,000 students prepare for life. There are christian colleges in all the states of India except Jammu and Kashmir and Nagaland<sup>15</sup>. The statistics of christian colleges and of students in India show that one out of every sixteen students in India studies in a christian institution.

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14. 'Christian Educational Involvement in India' by T. A. Mathias S. J., *ibid.*, p. 85

15. *Journal of Christian Colleges in India*, Vol IV, No. 1 - 1970 p. 32

Many charges are levelled against the christian private agencies which have grown into a formidable force in the educational field in India. It is sometimes alleged that institutions originally conceived to offer shelter to the orphans and the destitute have turned out to be places offering special training to the children of the rich<sup>16</sup>. It is said that the degrees earned in far off christian temples of learning have come, in course of time, to indicate the superior social status of the educated. These charges are not of a serious nature. On the other hand it is unjust to allege that missionaries attempted either to exercise undue influence on the Indian people or to exploit them, or that they used their institutions as channels to make foreign money available to new converts. It is true that the capital investment for these institutions was made by foreign missionaries. But it must be borne in mind that the donors were men of integrity actuated by charity: men who expected nothing in return except the welfare of their fellowmen. The great educational institutions run by christian agencies continued to maintain high standards of excellence even after India attained independence. It was after 1952 that the private agencies in general came under fire from adverse critics. The reasons for this are many. By 1947 most of the foreign missionaries had been constrained to leave India, and their successors had a hard job holding up their lofty ideals, and maintaining the standards of excellence. The pressure from outside to expand rapidly was very high. More and more private agencies entered the field of education, exploiting the policy of the governments in the states and at the centre, between 1947 and 1965, to subsidize and encourage private enterprise. It cannot be claimed that all these agencies were governed by the same spirit of love. Occasionally there were lapses on their part. But these failures are negligible when compared to the magnificent service they have been doing to the country<sup>17</sup>. The capital they invested to start the great institutions runs to the tune of several million rupees. They have been consistently contributing enlightened leadership to the country, and they have continued to emphasize the necessity of respecting human dignity and freedom and restoring man's innate nobility to him.

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16. 'The Role of Christian Colleges' by Cardinal Gracias, p. 24

17. cf. *Journal of Christian Colleges in India*, March 1969. Editorial p. 1

Christian education has been responsible for bringing about a cultural revolution in India in a century and a half. It could restore Hinduism to its purity and pave the way for the emergence of a man like Gandhiji. It could produce a nation with faith in democracy as well as truth and duty. It taught Indians that man is the crown and glory of creation, that his earthly life is not illusory but real and of profound significance to him. The supreme duty of man is to be humane, and in charity he finds the fullest expression of his soul. These ideals were able to inspire Indians for decades: but now much that has been done by the christian agencies is being discredited. The high christian ideals are now being trodden under foot. Society is gradually becoming dehumanized. Education at present does not seem to aim at restoring man's native glory and destiny to him. And what can christians do about it? Have they the spiritual strength to resist the policies and programmes of the *government* which seek to secularize education at the expense of human values? If enlightened leadership is not emerging from the training grounds of our country, "christian institutions must at least serve as an island of objectivity and commitment to truth."<sup>18</sup> And this alone, in the ultimate analysis, is the justification for the existence of educational institutions in India.

M. A. College  
Kothamangalam

K. M. Tharakan

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18. *Challenges and Opportunities in Indian Higher Education* by Fr Paul Verughese, p. 8

# The Church's Future Contribution to Moral-Religious Education

It is undeniable that in the past the Church's contribution to moral-religious education in India was significant. What particular contribution has the Church made to moral-religious education in the past?

She prepared her students to lead disciplined, austere lives. She inculcated in them principles of social justice that prepared them to become leaders in a traditional society.

She taught them to be good wives, good husbands, good parents.

She prepared them to subscribe to the existing order of things - for that was what 'good' connotated. Those who were critical were dubbed disloyal; those who kept the 'rule' were 'good'.

But today the Church's moral-religious teaching has to discover a new approach, a new dimension, even as the Church has to adopt a new attitude. The aim of its moral-religious teaching today can be summed up in a single phrase: *To help Christians and non-Christians alike to shoulder their responsibility in the reconstruction of a new society and the creation of a new culture worth living in*, to provide opportunities that will enable persons to discover new norms for a society that is breaking away from traditional patterns.

As India emerges from a traditional society into a modern one the secular role of the Church appears to be becoming more and more evident. Her primary role still stands undimmed and untarnished but certain theological perspectives are taking on a new significance. Three events taken from the Bible can make this change of approach explicit - Exodus, Christ's Second Coming and the whole notion underlying 'Shalom'.



In the traditional Church imparting moral-religious teaching, the Exodus from Egypt and the call of Abraham had a significance different from what is woven into it today. So too the theological image of the God of might and power coming to judge the living and the dead, so too the image of 'Shalom', Peace promised to men of good will. Moral-religious teaching, if it has to become relevant today, has to bring to the theological perspectives just referred to a twentieth century mind and heart that throbs through contact with the bleeding heart of 20th century humanity. In this context the Exodus from Egypt becomes the framework for a theology of liberation and humanization, stressing the compelling need for freedom for those who have been the victims of racial hatred, of social political pressures and economic exploitation. Man has, "more than ever today, a dire need of an *Exodus* more urgent and more profound than did the Israelites of old". And the Church has to be mid-wife to en-slaved man and usher him into that Exodus which Yahweh initiated through his prophets, but which since Christ's Incarnation it is the Church's duty to perpetuate.

The image of the God of Power coming in pomp and majesty to judge the Living and the Dead is seen within the liberating framework of the God of Hope, the God who will release in and through history, with the help of human beings, the destiny of men through possibilities which have to be realized socially.

The image of Shalom stresses the wholeness of man and society, and the building up of a world in which freedom and justice meet.

This is the new perspective within which the Church has to grope her way towards finding a new approach to its moral-religious teaching. And in switching over to this new perspective the Church need not be afraid of losing her 'distinctive' Christian heritage. The "illuminating perspective of the proclamation of the good news, as central to the mission, death and resurrection of Jesus must always remain." But we have to remind ourselves that the reign of God through Jesus Christ as He stepped into history created a *crisis of choice* and with it the possibility of renewing the face of the earth through the creating

and redeeming power of Christ. The typical Christian challenge and Christian response includes too the Gospel *call to repentance*. In addition we see that the signs of the coming of God's kingdom are to be discerned in the provision of daily bread for all, that is to say in the adequate production and just distribution of economic goods and services, as well as in the forgiving of sins of one another so that men may learn to live in love and brotherhood and peace; in the strengthening of men for the struggle against the temptations that beset them in their personal, professional and community lives. Christian moral-religious teaching today needs to stress personal repentance, social renewal and the possibility of human development and to show that human development including economic well-being, social values and religious aspirations as all critically affirmed in view of the possibilities opened up in God's coming through the reign of Christ Jesus. In this way the New Jerusalem becomes for us the City where God dwells with man in the fulness of human development.

In its new outlook, the Church's moral religious education will aim at focusing attention on the person — on the total development of the human person, stressing man's responsibility in the shaping of the conditions, moral, spiritual, social, political and economic which will enable him to become an instrument of change for himself and his fellowmen so that human beings may become their best selves. It is true that the Church should not confuse its role and become identified with political and economic systems, but it should not make the opposite error which it has fallen into in the past of preaching resignation, preparing its members to fit into existing patterns of society that foster political, social and economic injustice, unconsciously compelling its members to serve God and Mammon contrary to the Gospel injunction that states categorically that no man can serve two masters, that he must serve either God or Mammon. The Church in the past has perhaps unconsciously perpetuated intolerable conditions by fostering acts of benevolent charity instead of trying to initiate radical reform by reconstructing society on the lines of justice and freedom and peace. The Church before she undertakes moral-religious education in the future should stop, dare to look herself in the face, and ask herself squarely, to what extent she has been responsible for existing patterns of social injustice and how far she has been responsible for

those very dehumanizing conditions that *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno* have criticized. The Church if she is to continue to be the Church of Christ must realize that she has within her the most effective means of bringing about a rebellion and revolution. For Christ was a revolutionary and he preached a revolution which did not do violence to others but began with violence to Himself. His moral-religious teaching was not confined to the four walls of a classroom nor was it given in the temple or synagogue, but in the realistic conditions of everyday life—beside a well, in the open fields as he walked from one place to the other, on the highways and byways. Perhaps the time has come for the Church to impart moral-religious teaching not by enunciating principles in lectures and sermons but by and through *significant acts*. Michel segulier in a meeting with the provincials of the Society of the Sacred Heart last November in Rome suggested conditions which made an act truly significant:

- ‘visibility’ – something done, not just a statement.
- a social and a psychological dimension.
- it should open out new possibilities, hidden potentialities not hitherto experienced.
- it should create a new situation.
- it should have a collective impact.
- it should have an importance greater than its own reality, in other words, a symbolic aspect.
- it should involve: a break from what was (rupture), a solidarity with what is envisaged as the purpose or goal of the action. Both these aspects, *break* and *solidarity* should be decisive.
- it should “knock down idols” or destroy taboos. (Examples were given of the first woman to go into a profession and the first journey of the Pope.)
- it involves a definite commitment.

For the Church's moral-religious education to be effective, such a programme of the study-reflective type is important if it has to continue to respond to the needs of 20th century India. But if moral-religious education as stated earlier, has to focus itself on man simultaneously *it must focus on society* – for the structure of society, both national and international, is relevant to the development of peoples. The Church by virtue of its

incarnational and transcendental dimensions is again uniquely equipped for this task of reconstructing society and working towards international justice for international brotherhood. In capitalist and economic societies the needs of man are relegated to the second place. Does the Church champion this cause? If the Church is genuinely interested in man as an individual and in the poor whom Christ stood for, she must express in a positive way her concern for society of which men are members. Therefore the Church must remain faithful to her role of bringing men to God by making sure there is dignity in their lives and in their work. The Church has to become a force for social justice and it must work with other forces at the national and international levels, at the Christian and non-Christian levels.

In this context service too takes on another form from what we have been accustomed to in the past. In our moral-religious classes in the past, Charity, benevolent Compassion, were key words. Today Christian service has to step out of its traditional garb of kindness and compassion. Dehumanized man has to be taught to lift his head, to become aware that within himself resides the power to become someone. Unless Christian moral-religious teaching convinces man that he can make effective choices, it will have failed in its purpose. And unless we teach the young to make effective choices they will continue to live marginal lives on the fringes of a society that is dying, and on the verge of one that is still to be born. The evils of living marginal lives are too obvious to need to be stated. The Church has to make persons today more aware of the demands of freedom, and the tremendous burden that freedom imposes. The time has come for moral-religious teaching to abandon the classroom and take its youth into the filth and stench of the slums, to expose them to social injustice in all its stark reality, expose them to the nauseating problem of disease and mass hunger - only from such exposure to life lived in the raw will the minds and consciences of our youth be stung into action, and will they rebel against structures with an inner dynamism and earnestness that will compel change. In the past our moral-religious teaching tended to draw a veil over areas of sin. We sheltered our young from treachery, debauchery, the loose living of red light areas, from the lure of pornography. Today it is impossible to shelter them from all that corrupts. The tragedy is that they have got



so used to the unjust situation, the inhuman situation, the corrupt and dishonest situation, that their minds and hearts no longer shrink from the abomination.

Another significant step in the updating of moral-religious teaching is that *the search must go on among men together* — the bishop, the priest, the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, the teacher set out to learn together. There are no ready-made blue-prints to offer. Are the teachers ready for this step-down? Is the Church ready to keep pace with, instead of being one pace ahead of, other non-Christians seeking new norms that we must discover together? Does she want to continue to be the Light on the Mountain when perhaps she needs to accept more humbly the position of being leaven in the dough?

The Church in its moral-religious education has always championed the cause of the poor but is she *ready to join the ranks of social reformers who demand not charity but justice*? Is she willing to concede that dignity is as important as bread? Gone are the days of 'benevolent acts of kindness.' The charity and kindness of Christ did not militate against social justice and dignity. Resources transferred from the poor farmer to the rich capitalist, or from the poorer economic to the developed countries, must be restored with interest on fair and equitable grounds. This is a moral demand. But the Church must also voice its conviction that poverty cannot be understood in terms of economics alone. The spiritual poverty and human underdevelopment of the exploiting nations make them in some ways the least morally developed. The struggle against poverty that the Church must champion must be waged on both fronts. The Church therefore in consumer societies must also point out, and help people to discover, values by which men should live. Gone are the days when she could impose values. Her more modern task is to provide opportunities which will enable young people to discover their values. This is a slow and painful process but a much more efficacious one. No economy has the right to go on increasing its own standard of living unless it can contribute to the establishment of a just order on a world-wide scale. The Christian Church has a special role therefore in questioning false values. But even as she questions false values she is in duty bound to search for solutions together with all men of goodwill.

The Church has to exercise her questioning role both in her struggle against the existing unjust social order as well as in the moral self-discipline and regulation of exercise of counter-power.

To conclude, Christian moral-religious education to be effective today has to be updated both in its content and method of approach. Even as it has to be consistently and actively on the side of the under-privileged – this was one of the signs of the coming of the Kingdom that the poor had the Gospel preached to them! – it has to help the spiritually poor to discover new attitudes, new norms of behaviour, to educate them into their responsibility for creating a new society worth living in. Today the only effective way to preach moral values is to *live Gospel values*. The Church has to live gospel values not in the pulpit but by leading men towards God by joining with them in attacking the existing order of things. To pioneer a new way, to lead an attack and be exposed to counter-attack from forces that promote violence, oppression and social injustice is not an easy task. It needs a certain moral resilience that can face rejection serenely, that can face exposure to ridicule and hatred from those who stand for the established order. It is only in this way that Christians who profess to be the Body of Christ can accomplish their God-given task of serving humanity by helping create a world ruled by justice, freedom, peace. The key solution is not the use of violent or non-violent methods but rather of imaginative reconstruction. Violence can produce chain reactions of counter violence that could wipe out and annihilate ultimately both the one who wields it and the person to whom it is applied. The primary focus should be on social and community organization of people, who identify their problems and acquire social, economic and political power to achieve their common interests. Our schools and colleges could well be the training ground in which these ideas are first nurtured, and where consciences are first sensitized, where new values are first discovered and once learnt in a sheltered way the learners will be ready to try them out in a society where a fiercer battle must be fought. Only through reconstruction in smaller groups will reform set in, in the larger community of the state, the country and finally in the world brotherhood.

# The Present Position of Christian Education in India

## — A Critical Review

### Growth in Christian educational work

The twenty-fifth anniversary of India's independence is a suitable occasion to make a review of Christian involvement in Indian education. The most notable feature of this quarter of a century, as Mrs Indira Gandhi remarked to a foreign journalist, is the simple fact that India has remained a free and democratic country and continues to operate the liberal constitution that her founding fathers gave her. Two of its most generous and noble provisions are the recognition of the citizen's right to educate his children in the way he thinks fit and the special protection and guarantee given to minority communities in respect of this right. Under this constitutional protection the Christian Churches of this country have gone in for education in a massive way and have opened literally hundreds of institutions of every kind throughout the length and breadth of the country. During the last twenty-five years there has been a 250% growth (from 73 to 176) in the number of Christian colleges. High Schools have increased almost to the same extent with the total number now standing at nearly 2,000, while primary schools number nearly 8,000. Thus the Christian community of India, numbering less than 15 millions, is today responsible for the formal education of more than 3 million Indian students, half of whom are non-Christians. This means that the Christian educational enterprise is larger than that of several States of the Indian Union. If university education alone is taken, the total enrolment of 165,000 students in Christian colleges exceeds that of any Indian state except Bihar, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. Since the increase in the Christian population is only about 100%, evidently the growth in the number of Christian institutions has far outstripped it. This is most evident in those states where there is a sizable Christian population such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Mysore.

## Reasons

The large increase in the number of schools and colleges is the first thing that requires critical appraisal. It is definitely a sign of confidence in the future displayed by the Christian community of India, and a proof that the community has no sense of insecurity. It is also a response to the demands persistently expressed by Hindu groups, chiefly among the élite who show great appreciation of Christian schools and colleges. Nirad Chaudhuri goes so far as to say: "Almost every socially ambitious Hindu wants to educate his children in a Christian school."<sup>1</sup> But there is no doubt that other and some what less worthy motives have also played their part in the rapid rise in the number of schools and colleges, like the desire to wield influence, power and prestige, the rivalry between one denomination and another and between different sections of the same denomination (like that of the different rites and religious orders of the Catholic Church). It is the last consideration which partly explains why so many institutions of the same kind have been started cheek by jowl in the same localities, even though neither adequate finances nor trained and qualified personnel in sufficient numbers were available. Owing to this absence of a completely pure motive in starting institutions it is not surprising that one of the major defects of many of our colleges and schools today is the lack of a clear perception of goals among the administrators and others responsible for running them.<sup>2</sup> This inadequacy produces many evil effects notably a deficiency in initiative, enterprise and creativity on the part of those concerned in meeting the true educational needs of the young.

## Weaknesses

This brings us to the second point. In the past, the Christian educational effort in this country was marked by a pioneering spirit. The Churches went in for that type of education which they thought the country needed at the time. Thus when Alexander Duff started Serampore College in 1820, one of his

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1. *The Catholic Community of India* by Kaa Naa Subramaniam, (Forward by Nirad C. Chaudhuri), Manillam, 1971.
  2. cf. *The Christian Colleges and Developing India* by R. Dickinson, O. U. P. 1971.



main objectives was to give education through Indian languages and thus develop them as suitable vehicles of modern knowledge including Christian religious knowledge. By the 1830's however, when the East India Company had decided that English should be the medium of education in this country, Christian missionaries changed their policy and took the initiative of opening colleges and schools to give education through English, this policy they now thought to be in the best interests of the people and of the Church itself. In the same pioneering spirit, Christian schools and colleges, defying tradition and rigid caste laws, were the first to admit women and untouchables. They were the first to lay stress on moral education and on games and sports as means of character formation.

It is worth asking ourselves whether we have preserved this 'frontier' spirit. I am afraid the answer will have to be a regretful 'No'. By and large we are now just 'carrying on', i. e. we are content to continue running our colleges and schools roughly in the same way as we did when we inherited them. As a result, there is less and less to distinguish a Christian institution from any other kind. There are of course notable exceptions: schools and colleges which continue to do an excellent job and which show great creativity, dynamism and sense of purpose in their work. Now I would maintain that unless our institutions respond to real needs and make a distinctive contribution to the development of the country, there is less and less justification for the Church to continue sinking large sums of money in education and deploying so much trained manpower (priests, brothers and nuns who could be doing other important religious work which they alone can do) in running them. This is going to become an increasingly important question in the years to come, as popular pressure for the nationalization of education grows, owing to the poor quality and the defective management of many private educational institutions. It is unfortunate that people seem incapable of distinguishing between well-run institutions and those that are a disgrace to the very name of school or college; but the fact is that there is a growing tendency to do away with *all* private enterprise in order to cure the weaknesses and curb the malpractices of *some* private institutions, which perhaps form the majority. As things stand, both central and state governments still seem to be committed to the

principle of permitting private initiative in educational work; though the significance of the word '*private*' is being eroded from year to year, owing to the increasing stranglehold that the government exercises on private schools and colleges, even those that receive no aid from the state. It would seem that we are gradually but inevitably progressing to the stage where the government will think of following Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma in taking over the entire educational system.

It seems clear that all those who are committed to democracy, not only in theory but also in practice, should defend the right of private individuals to have some share in the educational system of the country so that this may not be used as a means of indoctrination of the young in any particular ideology but may reflect the diversities and the legitimate cultural and political differences that exist in such a varied population as that of India.

### **Christian schools and social justice**

In today's context there is one problem which none of us should fail to consider: how far do our schools and colleges contribute to the promotion of social justice? Can anybody justly level against our Christian institutions the accusation that Gunnar Myrdal makes against the educational system in many developing countries including India? "The Educational system embodies strong vested interests on the part of the administrators, the teachers, the students and above all the families in the powerful upper class who do not want to undermine the bolstering of their positions provided by the inherited (from colonial times) school system."<sup>3</sup>

We must seriously consider this question. There is no doubt that in the last century when Christian churches opened schools and colleges, one of their dominant motives was to uplift the socially depressed classes of Indian society, like women, Harijans and other 'low caste' people by providing them with high-class education at a cheap price. Many writers on the history of Indian education acknowledge that this was one of the most noble

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3. *The Challenge of World Poverty* by G. Myrdal p. 781, Pelican, 1971.

inspirations of the Christian educational effort<sup>4</sup>. It would appear that things have somewhat changed in the course of the last century. Owing to their very excellence, Christian institutions rapidly attracted applicants from the middle and upper classes of society. As the pressure from these classes for admission of their children grew, those running the institutions almost inevitably began to succumb. As the choice of students became wider and wider, purely academic standards of admission began to be used, which by their very nature favour those classes of society which can afford better conditions of housing and study for their children who in consequence fare better academically. Thus little by little institutions which were started primarily to serve the poor began to be linked with the more affluent classes. Though the majority of our schools and colleges (chiefly in the South) still educate all classes of society including a large proportion of the poor, there is no doubt that the general image projected by Christian educational effort is that it caters mostly for the rich. As J. P. Naik once said at a meeting: "In Christian institutions, quality seems to be allied to privilege, and to this extent they are less Christian than they were a hundred years ago." In today's socialistic climate, when quality appears inseparably allied to privilege, there is often an urge on the part of the people to destroy both. It is important, therefore, that Christian schools and colleges should, in future, pay special attention to this point and devise effective means of serving all the classes of society and especially the poor. They must change their educational methods so as make of their students agents of social justice in the country. This is surely one of the great services we can render to the nation, chiefly if we manage to ally this concern for social justice with the maintenance of high academic quality.

### Non-institutional work

Till now Christian educational work has been almost exclusively bound up with institutions. In fact numerically speaking it is doubtful if anywhere else in the world, the Christian Church has devoted so much of her resources in personnel and finances to the running of schools and colleges. Little or nothing has in consequence been done in non-institutional, non-formal avenues

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4. cf. *History of Indian Education* by J. P. Naik & Syed Nurullah.

of educational service. With all the problems that educational institutions are now facing from their students, their teachers, the public and the government; with the constant threat of government interference and even take-over hanging above them, providence and foresight seem to require that the Churches should seriously begin, right now, to devote time and thought to discovering other relevant avenues of educational service to the national community. I would advocate the setting up of a *Christian Centre for Educational Innovation and Development*. This should be an autonomous, ecumenical, self-financed body. It should have two wings: The first should be a 'Brains Trust' which will bring together eminent thinkers to ponder on the educational needs of the country and suggest innovative educational procedures corresponding to the real developmental needs of the nation. The second wing will be a research and planning division which will devote continuous attentions to discovering the true needs of the country and to the planning required for executing the schemes proposed by the Brains Trust. To this wing could also go for scrutiny, and eventually for assistance in implementation, innovative plans and projects thought up by others outside the Centre. The good that this measure can do for the educational task of the Church is enormous. It would amply justify the outlay involved in setting up an endowment fund to ensure that the Centre is self-financed and independent of pressures of any kind. The All-India Association for Christian Higher Education has already constituted a modest 'National Educational Thinking Cell', and four regional units, the first step towards the Centre that is proposed here. Two years' experience have shown that the Thinking Cell has a bright future if its activities are further developed along the line of a research and planning section. In sum, what is being stated here is that the Churches need to devote more thought, attention and finances to the important problem of educational innovation for the future. They should call for a moratorium on the opening of new institutions of the traditional sort in order to find funds for this purpose. There is no doubt that this would be a daring decision to make, but it seems certain that it will pay rich dividends in the years to come.



# Nationalization of Education?

## — A Sociological Evaluation

The answer to this question can only be that "much can be said on both sides". And much *is being said*, and very vehemently too, on both sides. It is doubtful whether anything new or striking can be added to the arguments already put forward in the debate. In fact the debate has fed on itself and become so fat that it is almost pointless now! But perhaps the debating stage is over and the verdict is imminent. What can be done, and needs to be done, at this stage, is to recall what the basic issues are.

There is a sense in which the question of nationalization is practically irrelevant as far as education is concerned. If there is a 'mind' in education no authority, however powerful and totalitarian it is, can 'nationalize' education. An authority may prescribe books; it may suppress speech and oppress those who defy it, but there is a restless longing of the mind which cannot be deterred by such actions. Education, particularly higher education is worth the name only if it is the agony and ecstasy of such a restless and relentless mind. In a real sense education is the groping of an eager mind which cannot be made subservient to any external norm, threat or reward.

This inherent element of education, however, cannot be used to argue that it is a purely subjective, individualistic process. There is an essential social dimension to education which is an inseparable aspect of wrestling with truth. As Erik Erikson says: "Facts are kept alive by being told, logic by being demonstrated, truth by being professed." It is this dimension that forms the basis of a community of scholars, whether it is a study group, a professional association, or a college or university. If education has it, the question of the relationship between the community of scholars and the community at large is immediately raised. In this context 'nationalization' (supervision and control by the

community at large) is a distinct possibility in education which, at times, can become a matter of necessity.

Here is the dilemma. Nationalization is inconceivable if education is viewed as an internal process (which it certainly is); but nationalization may become necessary if education is viewed as a social activity (which also it certainly is). To be sure, this is not the only problem in the nationalization debate but it is an important one frequently forgotten or overlooked — this dual nature of education. When it is forgotten the inherent tension within education can be turned into two separate questions set in perpetual opposition. Once this happens the two aspects come to have their champions, with the educators understandably defending the first and “others” (represented, let us say, by politicians) taking the stand of the second. The lines of battle are drawn and the two sides go into it with the dictum that all is fair in war!

Educationists believe they are the servants of knowledge and of no one else, and that they, and they alone, are the jealous guardians of the eternal verities. Theirs is not an occupation, but a vocation, and it is their desire that they should be governed only by the self imposed rules of their chosen order of thinking. If their life is not entirely one of meditation, it is essentially one of reflection, and to their way of thinking it is not proper to expose a life of this kind either to the pressures or the chores of the mundane world. They live in their sanctuaries viewing the world outside sometimes with benign indifference, sometimes with condescending concern, and always with scholarly criticism. And they expect their attitude towards the world outside, be it concern or criticism, to be accepted as the utterances of wisdom mediated through its chosen votaries. The noblest of all professions, this is how *they* describe their life's mission. Any suggestion that their chosen vocation should be brought under the ruthless, unprincipled and dirty authority of the power-hungry rulers of the world would not only be repulsive, but positively sacrilegious.

There was probably a time when learned men were free to nurse these views about themselves and others. This was when the rest of the world was not aware of their existence, or tolerated their notions as the innocuous worms-eye view of a

world described in books. But those days of mutual condescending toleration are over and the position today is one of claims and counter-claims.

It is important to realize that the seeds of the confrontation between the world of learning and the world of affairs were sown by changes in the philosophy of education itself. For long centuries in our country and elsewhere the emphasis on education was on its exclusiveness, both in terms of its concerns and in its clientele. The ancestral occupation of an exclusive caste, the luxury consumption of an affluent class, or a combination of both, — this is what education has been for many centuries in the past. Cardinal Newman has ably expounded its philosophy of personal pursuit of an abstract excellence. There are some who even today swear by the dictum of 'knowledge for its own sake', considering everything else as crude utilitarianism not compatible with the ethics or aesthetics of a genuine scholar. But it would be reasonable to say that the dominating educational philosophy today is one which views such an attitude as a relic of the past. The cardinal theme in today's educational philosophy is that knowledge is for life and that the fundamental task of education is to solve life's many problems. In this sense a certain universality is claimed for education, at least for its concerns, bringing within its ambit anything as mundane as a new way to make bread or preserve butter, and anything as sublime as defining the goal of a society or spelling out the meaning of life itself. Of this view the Indian Education Commission's (Kothari Commission, 1966) Report with its significant title, "Education and National Development" is a very concrete and vocal representative. Nor is it an isolated one. Much of the work of UNESCO, for instance, is informed by this philosophy. Compared with the traditional exclusiveness of education what this view represents is a breaking down of the walls of partition and the penetration of knowledge into all the nooks and corners of a very earthy world as well as into the heights and splendour of a new ethereal world. 'Knowledge at the service of society' is the new motto. It is the result at once of the tremendous expansion of knowledge in recent times and of the civic consciousness of its servants.

It is a fact that knowledge is now not confined to the libraries, the laboratories and the class-rooms. And it is a fact that educators are not confined to colleges, universities and research institutes. They are in all capitals and on all commissions, in politics and in parliament. They would like to be everywhere that decisions are made. Even at its best, does all this come from a desire to serve, or from a cleverly camouflaged eagerness to dominate? Who decides? Examine some of the oft-quoted and widely applauded claims of the Kothari Commission about the role of education.

“The destiny of India is now being shaped in her class-rooms. This, we believe, is no mere rhetoric. In a world based on science and technology, it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people....” “If this change on a grand scale is to be achieved without violent revolution (and even for that it would be necessary) there is one instrument, and one instrument only, that can be used: education. Other agencies may help, and can indeed sometimes have a more apparent impact. But the national system of education is the only instrument that can reach all the people...” “Its (the university’s) business is not primarily to give society what it *wants*, but what it *needs*, and obviously they are not always identical. It is not a community service station passively responding to popular demand and thereby endangering its intellectual integrity.”

Who decides what society really needs? Who decides that education is the only means of achieving what society wants? And who decides that education determines the prosperity, welfare and security of the people? Are these the views of the people, or are these the views of the *educators* who have always had inflated notions about their occupation? To arrive at answers to these questions let us pose some (imaginary) counter-claims.

‘The destiny of India is now being shaped in her parliament. This, we believe, is no mere rhetoric. In a society based on the popular will it is the representatives of the people who determine the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people...’ ‘If change on a grand scale is to be achieved, there is one instrument, and one instrument only, that can be used: political power.’ ‘Its (the legislature’s) primary



business is to give educational institutions not what they *want*, but what they *need*, and obviously these are not always identical. It is not a service station that passively responds to academic demands, thereby surrendering the sovereignty of the people vested in it...'

Cannot these counter claims be valid? To reinforce the argument, consider that they have come from a group of 'uneducated' persons who, nevertheless, are the chosen representatives of the people. Which claims now have greater weight, the claims of the educators on behalf of education or of the politicians on behalf of political power? And whose claim is more valid, that of the educators who say that their task is to give society not what it wants, but what it needs, or the claim of the politicians that they can give education not the freedom it wants, but the freedom it needs?

The questions are seldom so sharply posed. But they are genuine issues however unwilling those who are concerned with education may be to see them. Let us keep the politicians out of the picture for a while and look at the problem again as an *educational* problem. Granted that an important aspect of education today is the training of the citizens of tomorrow, do not the citizens of today have a right to influence that training? Granted that education is the weapon to change society, does not society at large have some say in deciding how this instrument is used? If it is the responsibility of education to define the goals of society, does not society have the right to decide who the educators should be? And if knowledge is power – social power – does not society have the right to determine how this power is generated, distributed and used? If educators are concerned about the entire society in terms of their own philosophy, what must be their answer to these questions? If educators do not honestly face these questions, their claims about education and its importance will easily be interpreted, and with adequate justification, as the propaganda of the haves against the have-nots. The plain fact is that education cannot claim to have a social function unless it is also willing to have some form of social scrutiny. To emphasize the social role of education without accepting society's right to criticize, question and correct, is

a subtle attempt at domination which will be resisted by a society conscious of its own rights and needs.

Our considerations so far about the relationship between education and society have been put in abstract terms. We must come down to earth by recognizing the fact that the issue we confront is not only the relationship between education and society in the abstract, but between educational *institutions* and the *institutions* of society at large. This is, in a sense, an inaccurate presentation because if we are considering society at large educational institutions are also social institutions. The problem, therefore, must be reformulated. At its best the problem is the following: *Education* as representing knowledge must inform and influence all the institutions of society but *educational institutions*, as institutions must be subject to general social decisions. Robert Gaudino begins his study, *The Indian University* with the significant observation: "In these times no institution is allowed to be only its own purpose, its own aspirations." Gaudino then goes on to say that it is in the very nature of things that the educational institution will be informed by its setting which will to some extent decide its character and functions. But his statement about institutions has a greater relevance to the problem under examination. No educational institution can pretend to be merely an *educational* institution. It will inevitably come to assume many of the general aspects of social institutions. There are appointments and contracts in educational institutions, expenditures and budgets, work and work-schedules. The autonomy that is claimed for the educational *function* cannot certainly be claimed for the educational *institutions*. And however debatable the question of the social control of education may be, there can be no two opinions about the need to have some form of social control over educational institutions.

It should not be surprising also if those who wield power and authority in society view education less in terms of its functions and more in terms of its institutional manifestations. From this point of view educational institutions appear primarily to be manufacturers of a scarce commodity — a degree, which allegedly carries with it economic prospects and social standing. It will be a piece of self-deception if educators are not willing to accept this fact. If young people are eager to come into

colleges (they come into colleges, but *not* into class-rooms) it is not because they believe that the destiny of India is now being shaped in them! If parents are willing to undergo tremendous sacrifices to send their children to universities it is not because they want them to receive an education which is the only instrument for social change! And if shrewd politicians are willing to finance educational institutions, it is not because they expect to receive in return learned advice about what society really needs! The call for nationalization of educational institutions comes often when the majority who have an interest in them discover that those who run them offer stones—precious stones, may be—when bread is sought. Society will not tolerate any institution which claims to have a social function, but appears to be socially irresponsible and irresponsible. From the social point of view educational institutions are also seats of power. And it appears to be the power of the privileged few. A society that believes that power belongs to the people will want to see that this concentration of power is destroyed, or at least brought under control. And a society which is suspicious of privilege notices quickly that many educational institutions are sub-standard institutions. It is seen that many educators who profess to serve society are more power-hungry than the politicians who are openly after power. It is seen that educators who claimed to be devoted to the pursuit of truth do not hesitate to suppress truth and distort truth when it is to their advantage to do so. It is seen too that educational institutions which are said to be seats of learning are centres of corruption. Society will not allow good intentions and learned proclamations to be used as covers for the meanest forms of exploitation and corruption:

From a social point of view, then, there are enough reasons to press for the nationalization of educational institutions which, in any case, are maintained at public expense in most instances. So we have a situation where the world of affairs demands nationalization of *education*, based on institutional considerations, and the world of learning which fights for autonomy for *educational institutions* resting its case on abstract principles of education. This is why the debate can go on with each side piling up arguments and evidences in its support with no chance of a real dialogue about the basic issues. Under these circum-

stances any 'solution' arrived at will be either a matter of expediency (that the State, for instance, cannot afford to take over all educational institutions, or does not consider it wise in terms of its political implications) or a mere exercise of thoughtless power (the State can take over all educational institutions no matter what the arguments against it are and what the consequences may be).

Is it possible to have a real dialogue about the basic issues and not a mere attempt to win cheap debating victories with both sides concentrating only on what is temporarily expedient? The problem must be taken up in its specific Indian context in terms of the history of higher education in the country and within the wider discussion of the nature of the society we are trying to evolve. It is clear that in the past the educational emphasis on excellence was closely associated with the existence of social exclusiveness. Even today, 80 per cent of our students in colleges and universities come from the top 20 per cent in the income bracket. Whatever might have been the historical reasons for this situation, contemporary society is not going to tolerate such inequalities of privileges. And in the philosophy of education there is nothing to suggest that opportunities for education must be confined to a small section in society or that excellence implies exclusiveness. Hence if educational institutions do not actively co-operate in the social attempt to make educational opportunities available on a less exclusive basis, they can only be viewed as institutions with vested interests which do not deserve to be tolerated. Similarly, in the past many private educational institutions were established, and today continue to exist, mainly to promote the private interests of private groups. Whatever may be the educational justification for such institutions, there is no reason to suggest that they should be supported by society at large. And many educational institutions which claim to be houses of learning have degenerated into dens of thieves and robbers. There is no place for them in any decent society.

Only after these institutional problems are solved and settled – or only after the processes to settle them are initiated – can educational institutions have a right to enter into a dialogue



about the future of education. This is not because some of these problems do not exist elsewhere in society, but because a dialogue, instead of a cheap debate can only be initiated after the two sides establish their *bona fides*. In view of the superiority (intellectual and moral) that the educational institutions claim, the *onus probandi* in this matter is on them.

The first step in a serious dialogue can be to point out that nationalization which operates mainly in the realm of ownership of physical resources cannot be applied in the case of education, and that even if educational institutions and educational systems may be nationalized, education itself is beyond the scope of nationalization. This is true even in a social system where all physical resources are socially owned. Through skilful propaganda and intimidation the semblance of a nationalized education can be brought about, but if there is a difference between the minds of men and the steel and coal and land that they use, there can be no nationalization of education. From the other side, then, it can be pointed out that the nationalization of educational *institutions* need not be an attempt to nationalise *education*, but simply to give it its legitimate place in society untrammelled by private authoritarianism and subtle forms of exploitation. It can be argued also that nationalization of educational institutions does not necessarily imply imposed regimentation in education or rigid conformity to a uniform pattern and that private enterprise in education does not necessarily mean the absence of regimentation or the presence of the innovative spirit.

One cannot say precisely how the dialogue will proceed and where it will lead to. But it can lead to a further clarification of the multi-dimensionality of education and the possibilities of plurality in patterns of educational systems and institutions. In the context of such a realization it should be possible to evolve new patterns that enable education both to preserve its freedom and to exercise its responsibility.

Viewed against this general background it is sadly clear that in the recent confrontations between private colleges and the State in Kerala both sides missed the opportunity of initiating an honest dialogue about the future pattern of education

in the State. The government's intentions in the entire episode remained none too clear. And certainly the impression was created that it was more a confrontation to test political power than an attempt to clarify any issue of principle. The government's approach was, thus, completely institutional. The poverty of thought on the part of the private colleges appeared in the fact that they too saw it only as an institutional problem to be determined on the basis of the political power they were able to muster and the fairly obvious inability of the government to take over all educational institutions *now*. No matter whose the 'victory' has been in the confrontation, no issue has been settled. The real questions were not even raised.

Even at the institutional level two questions of principle were involved which will have to be raised and faced if anything more than an uneasy truce is to prevail. The first is the question of finances, some aspects of which figured prominently in the confrontation. Those who have examined the economics of education are convinced that education cannot easily be brought under the cost-price principle; it hardly pays for itself in a cost accounting sense. Hence an element of subsidy in some form is almost inevitable in educational operations. Three options are open here. The first is to charge fees on a cost-price basis. This would mean a substantial increase in fees limiting education to the few who can afford such high fees. Apart from the ethics of this solution and its social implications, one of its consequences will be that a large number of existing educational institutions will have to be closed down. The second option is for the subsidy to come entirely from the State. But if the State finances educational institutions to this extent, some form of State control on the institutional aspects of education is inevitable even if the State is not eager to control education as such. There is a third option which is for the community at large to assume the financial responsibility for education. In the Kerala confrontation the private colleges had an opportunity to pose the third alternative both to the State and to the community at large, because the first two options turned out to be unacceptable. But in their attempt to mobilize public opinion against the second option they failed to place before the section of the population that came forward to support them the possibilities and challenges of the third option.

The second and closely connected issue is related to the administrative pattern of private colleges. How 'private' can the administration of a private college be allowed to become? One of the anomalous problems thrown up by the Kerala (as well as all India) private enterprise in education is that while these institutions cater to a fairly broad cross-section of the community at large, in most cases the administrative machinery is narrowly sectarian. If the argument that education is different from steel and coal is used to fight against the State take-over of educational institutions, the same consideration should also suggest that educational institutions should not have narrow and exclusive administration of any kind because the problems that are said to exist in the case of state ownership of educational institutions — rigidity, indoctrination, authoritarianism etc. — are latent also in the case of administrations that are too 'private.' The Kerala confrontation was an excellent opportunity to focus attention on this issue, but one gets the impression that the private colleges deliberately refrained from any discussions of this aspect. Could it be that their desire to keep private colleges too private did not have any educational sanctions and they were therefore afraid to bring it out into the open?

It was disappointing too that when the private colleges especially those under Christian management, did raise a question of principle, it was not an educational principle, but the expedient issue of minority rights. From the sequence of events it was evident that the minority rights issue was pressed into service simply to arouse passions and emotions and thereby to avoid even the possibilities of a rational discussion of many genuine educational issues latent (or deliberately hushed up?) during the confrontation.

It would thus appear that so far there has been only a sham battle about a very serious problem. It would appear too that there is a deliberate effort to avoid any serious discussion of the real issues. Who is responsible?

# Nationalization of Education

## — A Theological Evaluation

### Introduction

It is not without some hesitation that I venture on a theological evaluation of the nationalization of education. For one thing, I am not an educationist. I cannot even pretend to be aware of all the implications of nationalization. And for another, the whole question of the Church's role in education is at present so emotionally charged, that one wonders if we are now really capable of an open and dispassionate discussion of the issues involved. Whatever is said about it, is likely to generate more heat than light.

Vatican II has created a new climate in the Church. It has ushered in a spirit of openness to developments in the modern world. The changed situation in the world as well as in the Church seems to demand that we take a fresh look at the Church's involvement in education. Today it may not be enough merely to reaffirm our right to run educational institutions, and then to reject out of hand the views of those who advocate nationalization. We need to rethink the Catholic position on education. In any case, it will not do us any harm thoroughly to re-examine our educational theory and practice. It is in this spirit, with this conviction, that I am sharing with you some of my reflections on the question. What is said here is necessarily provisional and incomplete.

### 1. Possibility of nationalization

For some time now a suspicion has been gaining ground, especially among the minority communities, that nationalization of education is just round the corner. The education policy of some state governments and the widely publicized views of certain radical groups have served to accentuate this suspicion. Is the government take-over of our educational institutions, then,



imminent? I do not think so. While it is quite true, that a growing number of politicians and a sizable section of the population are in favour of a more effective state control of private schools and colleges, there is reason to believe that India will not in the near future nationalize education.

The Constitution of India clearly grants to religious and linguistic minorities, and indeed to every citizen, the right to establish educational institutions.<sup>1</sup> Our judiciary has consistently upheld this right and thwarted every effort to encroach upon it.<sup>2</sup> The Education Commission, set up by the Government of India, has made room for private enterprise in education.<sup>3</sup> And not long ago, the Prime Minister expressed herself firmly against the nationalization of education.<sup>4</sup>

There is, then, no reason for us to get panicky. Our schools and colleges will not be nationalized overnight. And yet the prospect of nationalization cannot altogether be ruled out. The last few years have witnessed a remarkable shift in government policy. Private undertakings like banking and mining have been nationalized. It is not fanciful, therefore, to entertain the possibility that one day our educational institutions will be completely taken over by the state.

But why should education be nationalized? Why do people advocate this? Probably different people do so for different reasons. First of all, there is a felt need in the country "to evolve a common system of public education which will cover all parts of the country and all stages of school education and strive to provide equality of access to all children."<sup>5</sup> Our national ideals of socialism and democracy demand that we eliminate "the segregation that now takes place between the schools for the poor

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1. Cf. esp. Articles 19 (c) (g); 25 (1); 28 (3); 30 (1).

2. *Minority Rights in the Indian Constitution*, published by J. E. A. in 1972, contains all major judgments of the Supreme Court and High Courts of India on Article 30 (1).

3. Cf. *Report of the Education Commission 1964-66*, esp. pp. 249-278; 446-447.

4. As reported in *The Indian Express*, Oct. 9, 1972, p. 7.

5. *Report of the Education Commission*, p. 251.

and the underprivileged and those for the rich and the privileged ones.”<sup>6</sup> Nationalization of education is considered a most effective means for promoting national integration. A seminar organised by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla, has stated: “The new design for education must combat communal and other divisive forces. The realization of these objectives necessitates the eradication of illiteracy, the nationalization of educational institutions, the abolition of public schools and other educational institutions based on privilege...”<sup>7</sup> As the bulk of the expenditure on school education comes from state funds, it is only natural for the Government to seek complete control of education. All the more so, since it is realized that “the growing educational needs of a modernizing society can only be met by the state.”<sup>8</sup> Socio-economic developments in the country largely depend on the quality of education given here. Concerned as it is with the temporal welfare of its citizens, the State naturally wishes to dominate the educational scene. Eradication of the corruption that exists in some educational institutions run by private agencies is adduced as yet another reason for nationalization.

There is, thus, a strong case for the nationalization of education. And we should acknowledge the validity of many of these reasons. In recent years, the Church has recognized the State's right to nationalize those sectors of socio-economic life that are vitally important for public welfare.<sup>9</sup> We must now readily grant the State's claim to a dominant role in education. But it is doubtful if the nationalization of all educational institutions is in the best interests of the country. Mr J. P. Naik, one of the top educationists of India, has said:

“The existence of private educational enterprise creates a balancing factor against a state monopoly in education and has a healthy toning effect on state enterprise itself. It also stimulates and encourages academic freedom and creativity

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6. *Idid.*

7. The Seminar was held in Simla from 3rd to 11th of June 1972. The full statement is to be found in *Quest* 78 (Sept. – Oct. 1972) p. 60.

8. *Report of the Education Commission*, p. 446.

9. Cf. esp. John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, in *AAS* 53 (1961) pp. 401–464, esp. pp. 413–415; 429–430.

and provides a proper soil for the growth of a body of independent academic educationists outside the official circle... All things considered, the best policy to be adopted in the near future would be to give an integrated and vital role to private enterprise in the national system of education and to devise methods which would develop its potential to the full and reduce its weakness to the minimum."<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Effects of nationalization

On the face of it, nationalization is a real calamity for us. But a careful examination will reveal a much more differentiated picture. Even now we do not enjoy complete freedom in the running of our educational institutions. The State already exercises a lot of control over them. It makes education policies, fixes the curriculum, holds examinations and pays the staff. As a matter of fact, private agencies are not allowed to conduct religion classes in these institutions during the regular school hours.

In practice, then, nationalization means, first of all, the government take-over of the school property. Will it pay a just compensation? We do not know. But it is to be hoped that a democratic government will not resort to an unscrupulous confiscation of the possessions of its citizens.

Along with property, the management of the school will also pass into the hands of the State. With regard to our educational institutions, this would mean that the Church will have no say in their organization and administration. She will no longer be able to admit students or to appoint teachers.

This has far-reaching consequences for us. The Catholic Church believes that only in a Christian atmosphere can her children grow up with the correct appreciation of values. This is certainly one of the main reasons for running Catholic schools and colleges. Now, if the State takes over these institutions, the Church will not be able to create in them an atmosphere congenial to the Christian education of her children. This is a serious

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10. As quoted by T. A. Mathias, "Kerala Colleges in Turmoil," in *Quest* 78 (1972), p. 24.

drawback. Still, the question must be squarely faced: Can we sincerely maintain that we have succeeded in creating a Christian atmosphere in our educational institutions? Existentially speaking, is it possible to do so in a pluralistic society that is becoming increasingly secular? When the majority of the staff and students in many, if not most, of our schools and colleges are non-Christians, it appears to be practically impossible to maintain a Christian atmosphere. If this is true then nationalization will not make our situation any worse than it already is. Here it may be worth while pointing out that the early Church did not run its own schools, that even today the majority of Catholic students in most countries of the world do not receive their education in our institutions.

There is also the question of religious instruction. Will we be allowed to conduct catechism classes in schools and colleges, once they are nationalized? We cannot say for sure. It may be possible to reach an understanding with the state authorities that will permit us to impart religious instruction to our children in all educational institutions outside the regular school hours. This has been done in Sri Lanka. If it is not possible, we shall have to look for other ways of giving religious instruction.

But let us have no illusions about the effectiveness of the religion classes that are now conducted in our institutions. Although there has been no scientific survey of the situation, the general impression seems to be that our catechism classes are by and large a failure. As religious instruction is generally given outside the regular school hours, students get the feeling that religion is not so important as history or mathematics. This feeling is reinforced by the fact that their performance in catechism examination does not affect the final evaluation of the year's work. The situation is made even worse by the casual and incompetent manner in which religion classes are conducted in many schools and colleges. Not infrequently, they are the most boring classes a student has to attend. And as religious instruction is usually imparted before or after the regular school hours, boys and girls tend to look upon religion as a burden. In their minds it is often associated with a lot of unpleasantness and inconvenience. They may even come to regret the fact that they are



Catholics, since their non-Catholic friends need not attend any religion classes.

This raises a still more fundamental question: Is it advisable to teach religion in our schools and colleges? In doing this are we not placing religion on the same level as a secular subject like physics or chemistry? Will it not lead students to look upon religion as just another branch of human knowledge, instead of regarding it as the all-embracing and life-transforming force it is meant to be? What our young people need is not so much religious information as formation. And this can never be satisfactorily given in the academic atmosphere of a school or a college.

If we keep this in mind, we shall not be overly disturbed by the prospect of nationalization. The fact is that catechism classes alone cannot provide the type of religious training our boys and girls need. If we are genuinely concerned about the Christian formation of our young people, we should not be satisfied with the religious instruction imparted to uninterested students outside the regular school hours, often enough by incompetent teachers. We must chalk out a bold and imaginative plan for the religious formation of our youth. Proper religious training at home, efficiently-organised Sunday schools, well-run youth organisations, summer camps, seminars – all these can contribute to the Christian education of our boys and girls. The celebration of a liturgy well adapted to the needs and aspirations of young people can also be a great help. If such efforts are made, it is of no great consequence whether we are allowed to conduct catechism classes in schools and colleges or not.

Nationalization of our educational institutions will make it impossible for us to help economically poor students to the extent we have been doing in many places. This is a serious disadvantage. However, in a number of States High School education is being made free, at least for the poorer sections of society. And the Church may be able to provide some scholarships for the more deserving students from poor families. In any case, we shall not then be accused of catering only to the rich!

It is feared that with nationalization the Church will lose much of her influence. It is true that the many big institutions

we run give us a great deal of influence with people in high places. We can get a lot of things done. Nationalization of education will probably mean the end of all this. But do we really need this type of influence? To say the least, the Church of Christ should be ashamed of running schools and colleges for the sake of the prestige and the position of power they bring.

We can think of another kind of influence, the moral influence of some of the priests, nuns and lay teachers in our institutions. The integrity of their life and the selflessness of their service are a constant inspiration to all those who come in contact with them. Their exemplary life challenges all students and makes non-Christians well-disposed to the Church. This sort of influence can surely be preserved, if after nationalization Catholic teachers, both lay and clerical, continue to serve in the educational field. In fact, they may eventually come to have still greater influence with the students, since they will no longer be regarded as part of the management.

One positive effect of nationalization is this: it will enable the Church to make more personnel and material resources available for other apostolic activities. For some time now many thinking Catholics have been asking if the educational enterprise is not taking up too many of our men and too much of our limited funds. No doubt, education is vitally important, especially in a developing country like India. And we should be glad to make our modest contribution in this field. Still, there are significant areas of Church activity, like the social apostolate, which need more personnel and money. I am not really opposed to priests and nuns being engaged in secular activities. All the same, I wonder if it is right for them to do so by neglecting their religious ministry. I am told that competent priests and sisters are not available in sufficient numbers to serve as chaplains and advisers to Catholic students, even though lots of capable priests and nuns are working in our educational institutions. If nationalization forces the Church to assign many more qualified men and women to such important tasks as work among youth or the social apostolate, then it will indeed be a blessing for us.

Another possible advantage of nationalization is that it may usher in an era of better Church-State relationship. Our

uncompromising stand on the educational question has often antagonized the state authorities as well as a section of the population. Once education is nationalized, we shall probably have a more friendly relationship with the State. Nationalization may also promote communal harmony. This is of great significance for the Church. If in defending the Church's right to run educational institutions we sow the seed of suspicion and hatred in the hearts of our non-Christian brethren, we are making it unnecessarily difficult for the Church to fulfil her Christ-given mission of proclaiming the Gospel to all men.

### 3. The Church's role in education

A thorough discussion of the Church's role in education cannot be attempted here. All the same, it seems useful to make a few comments on it. The *Magisterium* has repeatedly affirmed "the Church's right to establish and to run schools of every kind and at every level."<sup>11</sup> The most forceful presentation of Church's case to date is to be found in the Encyclical Letter of pope Pius XI on *The Christian Education of Youth*. We shall now briefly examine his views.

"The first ground of the Church's right," he says, "is that supreme teaching authority and office which the divine Founder of the Church delivered to her." (art. 17) In this connection the Pope quotes Mt. 28:18-20. It is clear that Jesus Christ has entrusted the Church with the mission of announcing the good news of salvation. She has the duty, and the right, to proclaim the Gospel to all men. No earthly power can legitimately deprive her of this right. Still, it is doubtful if the Lord has given her a mandate to run schools and colleges.

According to Pius XI, "The second ground of the Church's right consists in that supernatural office of motherhood whereby the Church, Christ's spotless Bride, bestows upon men the life of divine grace and nurtures and fosters it by her sacraments and teaching." (art. 18) It is certainly part of the Church's mission

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11. Vatican II, *Declaration on Christian Education* (GE), Article 8. In note 1, the Declaration refers to earlier documents of the Magisterium.

to educate her children in the attainment of Christian maturity. "In discharging her educative function," as Vatican II has remarked, "the Church is preoccupied with all appropriate means to that end. But she is particularly concerned with the means which are proper to herself, of which catechetical training is foremost." (GE 4) But one wonders if the right to run schools for secular education falls within the scope of the Church's maternal function!

Pius XI thinks that it does. He says: "Therefore, even other branches of human learning and training, which absolutely speaking are the common property of individuals and society, are at the free and independent disposal of the Church, and above all, are subject to her independent judgment as to how far they may be helpful or detrimental to Christian education. The Church has this right for two reasons; first, because as a perfect society she has the absolute right to choose and acquire the means and safeguards necessary for her end; and secondly, because every branch of learning and training, like every human action, is necessarily dependent upon man's last end and therefore, of equal necessity subject to the commandments of God's law, of which the Church is the infallible guardian, interpreter, and teacher." (art. 20)

The view that the Church is a perfect society has been steadily losing ground. Vatican II does not mention it even once. The Council does, however, share the Pope's concern that every branch of human learning be imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, since it has a bearing on man's final destiny. Speaking of the Catholic school, Vatican II states: "It strives to relate all human culture eventually to the message of salvation, so that the light of faith will illumine the knowledge which students gradually gain of the world, of life, and of mankind." (GE 4)

It is important that the Gospel spirit must pervade every dimension of our life. From their childhood days young people should be trained to let the Christian message influence the totality of their lives. Does this demand that the Church run its own educational institutions? Not necessarily. It does not appear to be the job of the official Church to engage in secular activities. As the Second Vatican Council has pointed out, "Christ,



to be sure, gave his Church no proper mission in the political, economic, or social order. The purpose which he set before her is a religious one." (GS 42) Since a secular quality is proper to the vocation of laymen, it is through them that the Church is to be present and active in the temporal sphere (cf. LG 31). "For it is up to them, imbued with the spirit of Christ, to be a leaven animating temporal affairs from within, disposing them always to become as Christ would wish them." (AG 15)

This is particularly true in the modern world which is becoming increasingly secular. The on-going process of secularization implies the progressive realization of the autonomy of the temporal sphere *vis-à-vis* organised religion. Vatican II has readily acknowledged this independence of earthly affairs (cf. esp. GS 36). Hence it would be better for the Church not to run schools and colleges, since general education is clearly a secular activity. But as education is a vital sector of human life, the Church should encourage suitable Catholics to serve in this area. Through them she can be actively present in the field of education.

There is yet another reason why we should not have any Church-sponsored schools. One of the serious problems facing India today is communal hatred. Think of the many communal riots that have erupted in different parts of the country in the last 25 years. All the citizens of India ought to contribute their share towards solving this problem. But we Christians must be in the forefront of those who work for communal harmony, since we have been entrusted with the message of reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor 5:19). One concrete way of promoting communal harmony is to let Catholic children grow up together with Hindu and Muslim children. If they all attend the same educational institutions, they will learn to appreciate the religious values cherished by their fellow-students.

This will help them to rid themselves of the ghetto mentality and to acquire a better national sense. There is no real danger of religious indifferentism. Experience shows that Catholic students in non-Catholic institutions are often more interested in their religion than Catholic students in Catholic institutions, precisely because they feel themselves challenged by the followers of

other religions. Besides, Vatican II has called for dialogue and cooperation with the great religions of mankind. Hence it will be quite in the spirit of the Council, if we give up our own separate educational institutions and send our children to national schools and colleges, where they will be educated along with their non-Christian brothers and sisters.

Since it is not likely that our schools and colleges will be nationalized in the near future, we should set about giving a new direction to our educational enterprise.

There is need for change in the organisation and administration of our educational institutions. It is vitally important that we make it possible for the laity to involve themselves more actively in the running of our schools and colleges. They must be regarded as our equal partners in the educational enterprise. We should throw open to them all posts, including that of headmaster or principal. As the All-India Seminar has suggested, "Educational institutions must be run by the academic community."<sup>12</sup> It has also recommended, "Programmes of student-participation in the making of the decisions that affect their own well-being."<sup>13</sup> The time has probably come when we should transfer the school or college property to carefully constituted trusts. Trustees could be selected from members of the staff and leading men of the locality.

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12. All-India Seminar, *Church in India Today*, p. 359.

13. *Ibid.* p. 360.

# The Future of Christian Education and Christian Education of the Future

The term 'christian education' is an ambiguous one. It may mean the process whereby the young are mentally and spiritually equipped for christian living. In this sense the content as well as the aim of education is specifically christian. What is imparted is the message of the Gospel and the aim is the growth of the young into christian maturity. Under this category of christian education may be grouped preaching, catechesis and the teaching of theology. But christian education may also mean secular education in arts and in the sciences either of nature (physics, chemistry, biology etc.) or of man (history, psychology, sociology etc.), which is in one way or another controlled by the christian community. Here the 'christianness' in question is external to the content and the aim of education. To this category belong the christian schools and colleges in India.

In this article we shall first consider the future of christian education as characterized by christian control in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of what christian commitment in the field of education should be in future. But the future of any social structure is determined by the confluence of objective socio-historical forces and the subjective decision of man. We shall therefore analyse the main socio-historical forces and trends to which christian education is exposed today with a view to answering the question how the christian community has to respond to the challenges they pose. Our method consequently will be both descriptive and prescriptive.

## 1. Christian education in a secular world

Secularization is a process that affects both the mode of thinking and the mode of social life of a given people. In relation to thinking it means the eruption of rationality and the vindication

of its autonomy *vis-à-vis* mythico-religious conceptions. In relation to societal life it means the progressive emancipation of the this-worldly spheres of human activity from the control of organized religion. In either sense secularization forms a significant aspect of the cultural change in contemporary India. In bringing about this change the western type of education has played an important role. It freed the Indian mind from the tyranny of magic, myth and religion over the personal and social life of man. It also undermined the priestly monopoly of learning. But the domination of secular society by religion still persists, though in an attenuated manner, in the form of schools and colleges controlled by religious agencies. However, in the more politically conscious States like Kerala such domination is being vehemently challenged by student movements and political parties. This indicates an irreversible trend in social evolution and will inevitably spread also to other parts of the country.

Far from being alarmed at this development christians must welcome it as an index of the maturity of secular society and gladly relinquish their control over secular education. However, giving up her own schools and colleges does not mean that the church will have to keep away from such a significant area of life as education. What she should do is rather to seek a new mode of presence. Since it is mainly through priests and religious that the official church exercises her presence in the domain of education their future role needs to be clarified. In a secular society those priests and religious who choose to work within the present system of education will naturally have to seek employment as teachers in socially controlled schools and colleges. The concept of social control implied here is broader than nationalization. Nationalization of all educational institutions is an evil. It will kill all initiative from below and will only produce standardized human beings. Neither will it allow room for legitimate ideological and cultural pluralism. Hence the good of the country requires that most educational institutions be run by duly constituted secular bodies responsible primarily to the people they serve. In such institutions governmental control should not exceed what is strictly needed for national co-ordination and planning. This of course means a restructuring of the entire educational system, which christians as a minority cannot bring about. They should however work for it in collaboration with other citizens. In the



meanwhile priests and religious who want to go in for systematic education in the arts and sciences will have to work in State-owned schools and colleges.

## 2. Pluralism of christian commitment

Another significant change taking place in contemporary society is the diversification of the agencies of education. In traditional India the family was the fundamental agency of education understood in its triple function of teaching the young how to do things (technical education), how to explain the phenomena of nature and of man (scientific education), and finally how to be a person in the community (humanistic education). With the onset of modernization and the break-up of traditional social structures all these three functions of education were taken over by schools and colleges. Modernization brought about also a change in the content of education. This is particularly true of its humanizing function. Formerly humanistic education consisted in initiating the young into the symbols, beliefs, traditions and institutions of the caste or the community to which they belonged. In the colonial era it meant nothing more than equipping pupils to become petty government servants and instilling in them the ideology and the value system of the western capitalist society. It is this empty humanism that is even today embodied in our educational system.

But modernization generated another process which today is challenging the monopoly of education by schools and colleges, namely, the explosion of communications media and the emergence of new types of socially educative groups. The press, the radio and the world of publications are becoming increasingly powerful factors in the education of the masses. Equally important is the role played by socio-cultural associations and political parties. For want of a better term we shall call these new modes of education para-institutional. This pluralism of educational agencies roughly coincides with a functional differentiation. Schools and colleges still monopolize systematic education in the natural and human sciences. But they are becoming increasingly disfunctional in regard to humanistic education, which task is fulfilled mainly by para-institutional agencies. The boys and girls of today assimilate their system of values less from schools and colleges than from newspapers, popular reviews, novels and films. They

derive their civic and political education from socio-cultural associations and political parties representing a wide spectrum of ideologies.

We must also note the significant fact that the values and ideas imbibed from outside the campus tend to become disruptive of the educational system itself. This is borne out by the strikes and agitations that frequently paralyse institutional education. It is equally beyond doubt that of the two modes of education, the para-institutional is the more powerful agent of social change. We may mention here three reasons for this new development. First, in educational institutions the stress is more on imparting information than on formation. In other words there is little involvement in the subject taught either on the part of the teacher or of the pupil. Secondly, in these institutions it is not dialogue or discussion but authority that is the primary principle of knowledge. The impersonal authority of the text-book has taken the place of the personal authority of the *guru* in ancient days. Thirdly, the present system of education is the product and the guarantor of an unjust social system. In the measure in which the student community becomes conscious of this fact they become automatically insulated against the value system it represents. It is outside the campus that these limitations are to some extent overcome. There truth becomes a matter of involvement and the search for it conducted in the context of dialogue with one's peers. It is also there that students acquire the weapons for social criticism and become radicalized.

We do not of course mean that institutional education cannot be so radically renewed as to become an effective agent of humanization. But the social pressure necessary for any such renewal will come not from within the system but from without, i. e. from the world of para-institutional education.

The fact that the primary vehicle of humanism is no more the traditional type of school and college provides the Church with a challenge and an opportunity. In her concern for maintaining and expanding institutional education she has woefully neglected the important area of para-institutional education. This is all the more deplorable since humanization is an integral part of her mission in society, while teaching mathematics or chemistry

is not. In future her primary concern should be to be a critical and creative force in the world of literature, the press, the radio and the film. She will have also to evolve new methods for being present in the equally important realm of social, cultural and political associations. For this we need a new type of priest and religious who would be writers, novelists, poets, radio artistes, film critics, script writers, trade union leaders and even politicians. However this should not be interpreted to mean that the Church should create her own world of communications media or her own communal political party. That would be nothing more than a new version of the old hierocracy. Her aim should be rather to utilize the existing secular media of communications and to infiltrate educationally significant associations and movements. Where new organs of presence are created it should always be on an ecumenical basis in the broader sense of the term.

### 3. Education for socialism

We have seen that the Church should be effectively present in the area of para-institutional education. The question now arises: what should be the content and function of this presence? Christians have been present in the educational field in one way or another for over a century. Yet their presence has not in any way hastened the march to socialism. It has, it would seem, even contributed to the strengthening of the existing exploitative social system, and to the perpetuation of the values of western bourgeois civilization. What is needed, therefore, is a new mode of presence. To define it more clearly we must once again consider the concrete historical situation in which Indian society finds itself today. For christian commitment has always to be in the manner of a response to questions which society poses to itself.

Here we come up against the most fundamental problem facing the country as a whole, namely, the conflict between goal and ideologies. The avowed goal that the nation has set for herself is socialism. This is implied in the Constitution which envisages the creation of a social order in which there will be "justice, social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and...fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and

the unity of the nation." (The Preamble) This socialistic goal however is contradicted by the system of goals, norms, values and legitimizations embodied in the educational system. The ethos characteristic of our schools and colleges is one of private interest, competition, aggressive self-assertion, the superiority of intellectual over manual work, peace at the cost of justice, and stability at the cost of change. This is partly true even of the ideology represented by the para-institutional agencies. The national newspapers on the whole reflect the vested interests of the giant capitalists. The small press is either the organ of parochial interests or is guided by mere profit-motivated expediency. All-India Radio which could become a powerful instrument for the education of the masses in socialism is more often than not utilized for justifying the policies and doings of the powers that be. There is of course a socialist press controlled by the leftist political parties. But the socialism it propagates is vitiated by an all-too-blind acceptance of the Soviet or the Chinese model, both of which are but aberrations of socialism as originally envisaged by Marx. Besides, the revolt against the capitalist system which the leftist parties foster among students and workers is often sham and hypocritical in so far as it is motivated by values of the same system, i. e. private interest and the lust for power. Seen from this angle the student revolt in the country is directed not so much against the capitalist system as against its exclusive character which bars them from becoming capitalists themselves. Similarly, when workers strike their aim is not so much to abolish the dehumanizing system of salaried labour but to secure higher wages so that they too can eventually belong to the bourgeoisie. Seldom, if ever, do they agitate for participation in decision-making or in management. Their aim is almost always a quantitative improvement in terms of material amenities, not a qualitative change in the social system.

If our analysis is correct neither institutional nor para-institutional education is geared to the task of ushering in socialism. This state of affairs bodes ill for the future of our country. To project socialism as the national goal and at the same time perpetuate educational forces that are counter-productive of the same goal can only lead to collective frustration. Fortunately more and more people are becoming critical not only of the existing social system but also of the revolutionary move-



ments engineered by leftist political parties. But they have still to become a significant socio-political force. Hence the historic need today is to create a socio-political movement genuinely committed to true socialism.

To meet this need is the task of christian education in the future. Christian commitment in the field of education whether within the framework of socially-owned institutions or through communications media or through participation in social and political organizations must have for its principal aim the creation of the proper cultural infra-structure for a socialist society. By socialist society we do not mean any one historical model existing anywhere in the world. What we have in view is a society in which the development of each individual will be the condition for the development of society as a whole, and, conversely, one in which the development of society will be the condition for the development of the individual. Only in such a society will we be able to overcome the dehumanization inherent both in collectivism and in individualism.

Here one might ask: What is christian about such commitment to education for socialism? Will not the giving up on the part of the Church of her schools and colleges mean the end of christian education? It is true that christian commitment of the sort we have suggested would mean the end of christian control of the educational system. But then such control historically came into being when christian leaders parted company with the Jesus of Nazareth and chose to reconcile the irreconcilable, namely, the cross and the sword. Hence in providing educational service without the exercise of secular power christians will only be recapturing the original vision and hope of Jesus. Besides, education for a truly socialist humanism will have an authentic christian content inasmuch as it prepares the ground for the coming of God's reign in history which is a reign of justice, love, peace and universal brotherhood. However, the 'christianness' in question will not be an exclusive characteristic of the education undertaken by christians but will be common to all men of good will engaged in the same field. From the point of view of our eschatological hope such education will be more genuinely christian than much of what parades under the name of 'christian' education today.

#### 4. Need for an attitudinal revolution

To fulfil the task of christian education as described in the foregoing pages there is need for a revolution of attitudes in the Church, of which we shall now pinpoint the more salient aspects.

i) Hitherto christian thinking has been the victim of what we might call the *ecclesial bias* which made the Church the be-all and the end-all of everything, and the world the potential or actual object of her conquest. In this view the world was christian only if it somehow came under the control of the Church. Today the time has come to effect a reversal of attitude by putting God and his kingdom first. And the kingdom of God is there where human beings grow into maturity and into one another to form a community of persons united in mutual esteem and love. And this precisely is the aim of all humanistic education. Seen from this angle education is not just one among the many activities of the Church but her mission *par excellence*. Only an approach like this can save the Church from the danger of reducing her mission either to one of making converts or at the other extreme, to one of being an instrument of mere economic development.

ii) Christian educators must rid themselves also of the *dogmatic bias* which sets up authority as the primary principle of truth. Such bias inhibits all radical questioning and even methodical doubt. It prevents christians from effectively participating in the contemporary quest after the ever-new horizons of truth. It also condemns them to the pitiable condition of having to reject every new idea, but only to be forced to relent in their opposition as the idea in question becomes widely accepted, and finally to come on the scene to sanction and legitimize it. Such an approach can only make them suspect in the eyes of the younger generation. Authority as the principle of truth therefore must be subordinated to the principle of obedience to reality, i. e. to the global experience of man. Christian educators should learn to regard truth not so much as a possession but as the distant horizon which beckons man from beyond. This implies that they give up their false intellectual security built on the foundations of western rationalism and on a pre-scientific static view of the world.

iii) Yet another barrier to be overcome is the *capitalist bias* which often coexists with feudal attitudes. The capitalist bias

manifests itself both at the level of ideas and of values. Take for instance the word 'justice.' It is commonly assumed that it stands for a universal value transcending particular historical periods. But what is really *meant* by the word bears the stamp of its capitalist origin. Thus, for instance, if the worker and the employer are given what is respectively their due, christians would call it a just order of things. But they easily forget that this type of justice presupposes and in no way calls into question the injustice inherent in the bourgeois mode of production. The concept of freedom is another example. For most christians it means the ability to do (to own and to produce) what one chooses unhindered by any other person. Here the 'other' is considered the limit of one's possibilities. This again is a capitalist concept of freedom. In the socialist perspective, on the contrary, the 'other', far from being the limit of one's possibilities, is the condition for the possibility of overcoming one's limits. Similarly, the much-hymned idea of peace means in reality the institutionalized disharmony characteristic of capitalist society.

The same capitalist bias pervades also the value system in the Church. The bourgeois ideology of private interest and competition is an important factor underlying the proliferation of institutions in the Church. The capitalist cult of efficiency has its counterpart in the high value which christian schools and colleges attach to efficiency and discipline judged solely in terms of first classes secured and trophies won. With the explosion of development consciousness among christians money, that symbol of capitalist alienation, is fast becoming almost the equivalent of 'grace', and 'grace' itself is being monetized. One could go on multiplying instances. What has been said is enough to show that bourgeois prejudices and preferences colour much of what we are used to qualifying as christian ideas and values. All this shows that nothing less than a radical attitudinal change is required if christians are to become a significant humanizing force in the domain of education.

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## BULLETIN SECTION



# A Brief History of Christian Education in India

The history of Christian education in India is studied here under three heads: *the period of spontaneous growth* (1700–1835), *the period of Government control* (1835–1900) and *the period of planned development* (1900 to the present).

## I

### The Period of Spontaneous Growth (1700–1835)

The beginning of educational institutions in India as such are not discussed here but only those of the modern western type. There were, to be sure, important centres, often with religious connections, all over India, notably at Taxila and Nalanda, but these centres were essentially different in character and had long become extinct or outdated when the present system was introduced.

#### The Thomas Christians of Kerala

But then what system did the Thomas Christians follow before any western missionaries came to India? It was in no way different from that of the high caste Nairs and Brahmins.<sup>1</sup> They had their own centres (*kalari*) for training boys in reading, writing and warfare. Specially qualified people called the *aśan* or the *paṇikkar* were deputed to this task. The training of children usually began at eight and continued till twenty-five years of age. Besides reckoning and Malayalam, they were taught also Tamil and Sanskrit, selections from the epics and the

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1. Govea: *Jordanda do Arcebispo de Goa Dom Frey Abixo de Meneses...*, Coimbra 1606 & 16–62. See also L. W. Brown: *The Indian Christians of St Thomas* Cambridge, 1956 pp. 186 & A. M. Mundadan *Traditions of St Thomas Christians*, Bangalore, 1970 pp. 150–52.

*Puranas*. Against this curriculum the Synod of Diamper passed a decree.<sup>2</sup> Then began the training in warfare. The training centres were common for Christians and Nairs and were owned by rich members of either community. Originally there were many Christian *asans* (a word probably of Hebrew derivation) but later their number decreased.

These Christians maintained a high intellectual standard. Many of them were well-versed in Syriac, Latin, and Portuguese. They had many books of the doctors of the Church besides the Bible and the Prophets.<sup>3</sup> Dionysio tells us that they loved sermons.<sup>4</sup> A good number of them were experts in *ayurvedic* medicine, a knowledge of which many cherish even today as their family heritage. Their girls also were trained at home in reading, writing and music. Faria Y Souza has noted the instance of a Thomas Christian woman arguing a case in a court at Angamali for three days without the help of lawyers.<sup>5</sup>

### The Portuguese

The Portuguese were interested more in the training of candidates for priesthood than in general education. So they opened college-seminaries at Goa, Cranganore, Quilon and Vaipikotta.<sup>6</sup> In 1567 Fr Henriquez and a Brahmin convert, Peter Louis, conducted a school at Punnakayal which enrolled pupils even from Goa.<sup>7</sup> The Portuguese Franciscans started a

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2. Jo. Facundi Raulin *Historia Ecclesiae Malabaricae Cum Diamperiana Synodo* Romae, MDCC XLV Actio Decretum XII et XIII H 92, 93.

3. The account of Joseph the Indian in Venice (1490) *Paesi ...Vespucci Reprints, Texts and Studies*, VI, Princeton, London, Oxford, 1916 – p. 159

4. F. Dionysio, S. J. *Informacao de christianidade..... Reino da India Oriental* 1578. SRD XXII, f 401.

5. *Oriente Conquistado*, Lisbon, 1698 Volume II p. 116

6. For the nature of, and courses in, a Portuguese seminary see A. M. Mundadan: *St Thomas Christians 1498 - 1552* Bangalore, 1967 pp. 117-144

7. Joseph C. Houpert, S. J. *A South Indian Mission: the Madura Catholic Mission from 1535 to 1935*, Trichinopoly 1937 p. 156

number of Schools in Bombay. In 1660 there was a College-Seminary at Tuticorin. Referring to the educational contributions of the Portuguese, especially Franciscan Missionaries, Dr Gerson de Cunha said: "Thousands of Indian families had been converted to Christianity, and from these the early British Government drew their supply of clerks, assistants and secretaries. They were the first fruits of the education imparted by the Portuguese Priests at a time when hardly any Hindu, Moslem or Parsi could read the Roman character."<sup>8</sup>

### **The Policy of the East India Company**

The East India Company was originally opposed to introducing western education in India, except for the Europeans and its employees. In 1793 owing to stiff opposition the House of Commons in Britain was forced to drop a resolution urging the gradual advancement of the natives in India in 'useful knowledge'. The Company's policy, however, was increasingly attacked in Britain by Wilberforce and others.

In 1813 with the renewal of the Company's Charter it was officially recognized that "... it was the Duty of this country to promote the Interest and Happiness of the Native Inhabitants of British Dominions in India... and... the Introduction among them of Useful Knowledge, and of religious and moral Improvement..."<sup>9</sup> Accordingly a sum of not less than three lakhs of rupees each year was to be set apart for the purpose. However, only from 1823 was the grant made available.

### **Tranqubar and Madras**

Missionary education was begun early at Tranqubar (near Madura) by Danish Missionaries. When the Company's ban on missionary activities was lifted in 1814, the London Mission Society and the Church Mission Society (both founded in 1792) began sending missionaries to India. Dr C. S. John, the senior missionary of the Royal Danish Mission at Tranqubar, published a pamphlet entitled *On Indian Civilization* which attracted the

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8. *The Origin of Bombay*, London 1900 p. 45

9. *The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* Vol. V London 1814-53 Geog iii. 3 cap. CLV. Sc XXX iii.

attention of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S. P. C. K.) in England. The Society's Board came forward to help the mission in its educational activities.

John Sullivan, the Resident of Tanjore, was the first government official of Madras to recognize the importance of educating the natives. Sullivan and Swartz with the support of the Company, the missionaries and the local Rajahs, especially of Tanjore and Marwar, started a number of schools, in which English was taught. The natives were attracted to these schools because a knowledge of English was a qualification for employment.

Twenty-five schools were established in Tanjore district by 1825, and within five years the number rose to 33, and the total number of students to 1,078.<sup>10</sup> In Madras, the Vepery Mission schools made good progress, John Anderson founded an Institution in Madras in 1837: the ancestor of the Madras Christian College and its High School.

### Serampore and Bengal

The credit of introducing western education in Bengal goes to the Baptist Mission Society. The pioneering missionary was William Carey. He learnt Bengali and Sanskrit, translated the Bible into Bengali and opened a school. Early in 1800 with a few Danish families he went to live in Serampore, a Danish settlement 15 miles from Calcutta. In 1801 Lord Wellesley founded the College of Fort William for the training of the Company's junior officials and Carey was made Professor of Bengali. An important contribution of his was the translation of the Bible into many Indian and non-Indian languages.<sup>11</sup>

The Serampore Mission started a system of elementary schools. The Marshmans and their son John Clark Marshman were the pioneers. A school for the training of teachers and an Institution (administrative) for Native Schools, were organized, and at first schools expanded at a fairly rapid rate. By 1818

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10. *Annual Report of the Madras District Committee of S. P. C. K. 1826*, ME 2 p. 105

11. Cyril Bruce Firth: *An Introduction to Indian Church History*, Mysore, 1961 p. 147



approximately 10,000 students were being educated in 92 schools in or near Serampore, 11 at Katwa, 3 near Murshidabad, and 5 at Dacca.<sup>12</sup> The facilities for elementary education in Bengal were far from satisfying. William Adam who made an intensive survey of schools in Bengal and parts of Bihar in the 1830's, estimated that there were 1,00,000 indigenous schools in a total of 1,50,750 villages, approximately 13% of boys of school-going age receiving elementary instruction.<sup>13</sup>

Something more was planned next: a College for the instruction of Asiatic, Christian and other youth in Eastern Literature and European Science. Some Indian and European 'Anglicists', as they were called, had opened a *Vidyalaya* in Calcutta in 1817, the first Western style college in India which later received a government grant and came to be called the *Hindu College*. The building for the college at Serampore was put up in 1818, and classes started in 1819. When in 1827 the King of Denmark granted the College a charter empowering it to confer degrees, a Christian University in embryo came into existence.<sup>14</sup>

The education imparted at *Hindu College* became rationalist, atheistical and irreligious and was disapproved of equally by Christians and orthodox Hindus. To counteract its influence Alexander Duff, a missionary of the Church of Scotland, started a school with 5 pupils with the support of Carey and Ram Mohan Roy.

## Bombay

Bombay was perhaps the only region where Catholics were ahead of the Protestants in starting educational institutions. The Franciscan Missionaries had established a number of parish schools and the Catholics were well ahead in primary education when the British took over Bombay in 1665. They were forced

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12. E. Daniel Potts: *British Baptist Missionaries in India 1793-1837. The History of Serampore and Missions* Cambridge University press, 1967 pp. 114-136

13. Anathmath Basu (ed) *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal*..... by William Adam - Calcutta 1941 p. 7.

14. For the subsequent History of Serampore colleges see Cyril Bruce Firth op. cit. p. 149

to employ Catholics as clerks. J. H. Gense, S. J. has attributed the subsequent decline of Catholic education to the expulsion of the Portuguese Franciscans from Bombay in 1720.<sup>15</sup>

The first Protestant charity school in Bombay was started in 1718 attached to St Thomas Church. The Catholics started the *Baretto Charity School* of Cavel in 1778 and the De Souza School at Gloria Church in 1800. A few schools of an elementary type also were introduced. The state of Catholic education continued to be deplorable. During William Bentinck's administration (1822-38) the Catholics of Bombay did not have a single ordinary secondary school qualified to teach English according to a special scheme of the Government.

Dr Hartmann was quite aware of this when he became bishop of Bombay in 1850. He made repeated appeals to the Prefect of the Propaganda for a few Jesuits. The first to work in Bombay, Father Walter Steins, arrived in 1853; others followed. The Sisters of Jesus and Mary were brought down from Agra and an orphanage and a few schools were entrusted to them. Bombay Catholics had their first college — St Xavier's College — in 1868 under Jesuit management. Though originally planned by Dr Hartmann it started only under the Jesuit Bishop Meurin.

The American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions had missionaries in Bombay. In 1816 their schools had 300 pupils. The C. M. S. had 6 schools in 1822 with 150 pupils. Rev. R. Kenney of the society formed a School-Book and School Society in 1825. The Scottish Missionary Society had 10 schools in 1822, and in 1832 John Wilson, backed by a group of interested laymen, started a school out of which grew the Wilson High School and Wilson College. In 1860 there were in Bombay altogether 42 Mission Schools teaching 2796 pupils of whom 669 were girls.<sup>16</sup>

## Madura

Among Catholics the Jesuits were the pioneering educationalists in most regions with the notable exception of Kerala.

15. *The Church at the Gateway of India, 1720-1960*, Bombay 1960 p. 158

16. Rev. M. A. Sherring, *The History of Protestant Missions in India*, London, 1884, p. 242

The Madura Jesuit Mission started a school at Nagapatnam in 1843 which became a high school in 1866 and was upgraded as the first Catholic college in India in 1868. In 1883 St Joseph's College already in existence was moved to Tiruchirappilly. In 1854 Fr John Baptist Trincal opened at Madura what was to be later on St Mary's High School. In 1883 the Mudura Mission had 148 boys' high schools with 6,900 pupils and 20 girls' schools with 1,500.<sup>17</sup>

## Kerala

For nearly a cenury the C.M.S. had the distinction of being the only organized agency which undertook the task of spreading general education in the area now constituting the State of Kerala<sup>18</sup> Their educational activities began under the inspiration of Col. Munro, British Resident in Travancore and Cochin (1810-19). With the assistance of Rev. Thomas Norton he planned a fourfold educational system: a college-seminary for imparting higher and theological education, a parochial school attached to every church, a grammar school serving as a place of intermediate instruction and linking the parochial school with the seminary, and a few schools for girls.

The Syrian seminary now known as Old Seminary (College) was established at Kottayam and Norton was placed in charge. In 1819 two schools were established one at Kottayam and another in the estate known as Munro Island (at Kallada, near Quilon). The former developed into a grammar school while the latter did not make any progress. The idea of starting a grammar school in the state of Cochin never materialized.

By 1824 there were 50 schools with 1,300 pupils. The instruction given in the parochial schools was of an elementary kind. From 1830 the number of parochial schools as well as of students attending them began to decline. The grammar school maintained a much higher standard and taught besides English and Sanskrit, Malayalam, Arithmetic etc. Its strength never rose

17. Joseph C. Houpert, S. J.; op. cit. p. 76

18. For a fuller account see P. Cheriyan, *The Malabar Syrians and the Church Missionary society 1816-1840*. Kottayam 1935 pp. 181-191

beyond seventy. The grammar school as a separate institution seems to have been discontinued in 1838, and was affiliated to Madras University in 1857 as the first college in Kerala.

### **Female education**

The first known instance of Indian girls being admitted to mission schools is described in the *First Report of Native Schools of 1817*. At Serampore, under the eyes of a teacher in whom particular confidence was reposed, several Hindu girls went 'through their exercises, separated from the boys by a mat partition'<sup>19</sup> Mrs Marshman started a school for girls at Serampore (1818). In Calcutta schools for girls were started with the support of the Calcutta School Society and the Society for Promoting Female Education, London. The first school for high caste girls was started in the same place by Drinkwater Bethune, President of the Government's Council of Education, with the help of Iswarachanda Vidyasagar. The credit of introducing female education in Kerala goes to Mrs Bailey.

## **II**

### **The Period of Government Control (1835-1900)**

Though a system of grant-in-aid had been working since 1823 it was only after 1835 that the government began to exercise any real control over the working of educational institutions. As a matter of policy missionaries all over India gave great importance to the study and teaching of native languages and literatures, though in most cases they also taught English or other European languages. They kept aloof from the controversy between the supporters of Indian languages ('Orientalists') and those who supported English ('Anglicists') as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges. When Lord Macaulay as Chairman of the Committee on Public Instruction appointed by Lord Hastings to find a solution to this problem exercised his casting vote in favour of the 'Anglicists', he was setting the general tone of the Indian educational system.

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19. E. Daniel op. cit. p. 123



## **Mysore**

The Basel Evangelical Society introduced modern education in Mysore State and started schools at Mangalore (1834), Dharwar (1837) and in Malabar (1839). In 1853 a first rate English school was established in Mysore as a result of a petition by a large number of the élite of the city to the Wesleyan Society in England. By 1881 the Society had a number of schools and so did the Basel Mission and there was one Franco-vernacular school at Mahe.<sup>20</sup>

## **Establishment of universities**

It was only after Sir Charles Wood's Despatch on education in 1854 that the Government had the complete control over the working of educational institutions. Wood proposed the establishment of a Department of Public Instruction in each province and of universities in the capital cities. His report envisaged a well co-ordinated system of schools, maintained by the government or by private managements receiving grants-in-aid. This opened the door to the establishment of full-scale Universities in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, as affiliating bodies rather than instructional ones (University instruction started only in 1902-4)

Government control at every level of education was almost total. The Missionaries resented this centralization. The Basel Mission in South India felt that the position was so unsatisfactory that it withdrew its schools from the government system in 1860, and tried to conduct them independently only to return to it again in 1867 because of the impossibility of competing with government schools.<sup>21</sup> This situation changed for the better only in 1882.

## **Expansion of Protestant schools and colleges**

During the period between 1854 and 1882 no university was established, but many colleges were started. Between 1833-57 some of the outstanding Christian colleges of our country were

20. M. A. Sherring op. cit. p. 263

21. Richer J. (trans by S. H. Moore) *A History of Missions in India*. Oliphant 1908., O. P. 312 ff

founded, all these colleges grew out of schools. From 1870 a large number of schools and colleges were established for women by Protestant Churches throughout India.

As a result of the recommendations of the Hunter Commission of 1882, the strong preferential treatment given to government schools as against private institution was reversed. Private colleges were permitted to charge lower fees than government institutions. This stimulated the rapid growth of private, especially Christian, institutions.

### Catholic education

By contrast the state of Catholic education was quite deplorable, except perhaps in the city of Bombay and parts of Madras Province. This was particularly so in Kerala where Catholics entered the education field only in the last quarter of the last century. The Jesuits, of course, were doing good work. Meanwhile the Salesians, in Pondicherry and Tamil Nadu, the Mill Hill Fathers in the Andhra area and the M. S. F. S. Fathers in Visakapatnam were making humble beginnings.

It was only with the visit of the Apostolic Delegate Mgr Meurin, S. J. (1876-77) that English education came to be valued among Kerala Catholics.<sup>22</sup> At the turn of the century the Kerala Catholics had no college, while the Protestants had two and the Jacobites one. They would have had one however around 1880 if only the efforts of the enterprising Syrian Vicar General, Emmanuel Nidhiry, had succeeded. But the idea of starting a college in collaboration with a Jacobite Bishop Mar Dionysius was not welcome to the Jesuit Vicar Apostolic, Mgr Lavigne.<sup>23</sup>

## III

### The Period of Planned Development (1900-)

A real sense of educational planning dawned in India only after the turn of the century. The first indication was the publi-

22. *The Carmelite Congregation of Malabar 1831-1931*, Trichinopoly, 1932 p. 92

23. Abraham Nidhiry: *Father Nidhiry: A History of his Times*, Deepika, Kottayam 1970. pp 185-192

cation of the quinquennial report *Progress of Education in India 1902-7*. According to a survey in 1906-7 there was a total of 3,341 high schools (excluding those mainly for Europeans and Eurasians) giving instruction to 4,88,585 pupils. A total of 39,36,822 children received primary education of whom 2,41,789 were in Mission schools other than Catholic.

In 1907 there were 161 Arts colleges and 15 professional colleges in India Burma and Ceylon. Of these 96 were managed by private bodies, 26 by the Native States, 23 by provincial governments and 4 by municipalities. Christian agencies had altogether 53 colleges: 50 in the British territory and 3 in Native States. These colleges were distributed as follows: Church of England - 16; North American Missions - 13; English Missionary Societies other than Anglican - 10; Scottish Churches - 7; Catholic Church - 7.

A significant movement to extend the scope of Indian education to agriculture and technology was highlighted in 1890 with the Voelcker Conference. Lord Curzon (Viceroy from 1899-1905) set up an Indian Universities Commission. Its report, published in 1904, recommended a tightening of university administrative procedure and organization. Grants-in-aid henceforth would require more stringent inspections, even though such grants were to be more generous when merited. Universities themselves were to become teaching units and set the standard for colleges. A 1906 reform brought science into the university syllabus for the first time in Presidency College, Calcutta.<sup>24</sup>

Between 1887 and 1917 the demand for more university education was met primarily by establishing additional colleges, not universities. By 1917 there were only 7 universities; by 1923 there were 12. Between 1948 and 1966, 42 universities were founded. The Sadler Commission (Calcutta Commission) of 1919 sought to strengthen government control over the universities and to stimulate the development of universities as unitary and teaching bodies. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reform of 1921 established the authority of the States (as against the Central Government) over the universities in their own territories. The

24. T. N. Siqueira, S. J. *Modern Indian Education*, Calcutta, Oxford University Press, 1960 p. 80

co-ordination of the work of the various universities was advanced in 1926 by the establishment of the Inter-University Board, a voluntary Board of Universities, which is active even today.

The period of Catholic educational institutions began only after the turn of the century. In 1904 Catholics had 12 university colleges with 1,343 students, 67 high schools with 97,770 students, 251 middle schools with 23,890 pupils, 4 'normal' schools with 77 pupils, 26 industrial schools with 275 students, and 76 boarding schools with 6,000 boarders. For girls there were 61 high schools with 3,200 students, 248 middle schools with 15,220 students, 683 elementary schools with 41,263 pupils, 59 industrial schools with 2,335 students, and 108 boarding schools with 5,200 boarders.<sup>25</sup> In 1920 there were 3,475 elementary schools and 370 colleges and high schools.<sup>26</sup>

The Kerala Syrians under their own bishops also registered some progress in education. In 1923, when their hierarchy was reconstituted, they had 2 colleges (St Thomas Trichur and St Berchmans, Changanacherry), 8 high schools for boys and 2 for girls, 14 English and 3 Malayalam middle schools for boys, 9 English and 13 Malayalam middle schools for girls and 428 elementary schools.<sup>27</sup> By 1937 they had 23 English high schools, 58 English middle schools, 33 Malayalam middle schools, 530 primary schools and 8 industrial schools.<sup>28</sup>

Almost the first instance of educational planning among Catholics on all-India basis was the All-India Catholic Conference, in 1922 for promoting 'the civic, social, economic, educational, moral and other interests generally of the Catholics of India, Burma and Ceylon.' It recommended the setting up of a Diocesan Educational Society in every diocese such as the Archdiocese of Bombay and the Diocese of Daman already had.

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25. *Catholic Encyclopedia*: McGraw Hill Company, New York, 1967, Vol. VII p. 442

26. Fr Proserpio, S. J., *Catholic Mission in India*, All India Catholic Conference Goa, Codialbail press, Mangalore, 1920 p. 30

27. Fr Bernard, T. O. C. D., *A Brief Sketch of the History of St. Thomas Christians*, Trichinopoly, 1924 p. 81

28. *Statistica Christianorum S. Thomae*, Orientalia Christiana Periodica Vol. III N 1-2, Roma, 1937 pp. 292-95



The Conference hoped when such institutions are established in all the dioceses of India, a great impetus will be given to education, and each diocese will vie with the rest in producing good results, especially if they compare their results and their methods at periodical conferences.<sup>29</sup> In 1956 the Xavier Board was established for co-ordinating the working of Catholic colleges.

Of special interest in the evolution of Christian higher education in India was the Lindsay Commission established in 1930 to evaluate the work of Christian (Protestant) colleges in India. A Committee for higher education was established in the framework of the National Christian Council, which functioned until the 1950's. The Methodist Church in the late 1940's and the Presbyterian Church in 1962 made evaluations of their educational institutions. The Principals of Christian colleges in India had a consultation at Tambaram (Madras) in 1966-7 from which the National Board of Christian Higher Education took its origin.

The Challenge to newly independent India with regard to educational re-organization was met by the Radhakrishnan Commission. Consequently the University Grants Commission was established in 1956. The most pioneering development in education in recent years has been the Kothari Commission. Its report (presented in June 1966) is explicitly concerned with national development and addresses itself expressly to calculated manpower and Five-Year plans. Among its controversial recommendations are the advocacy of six special universities and fifty autonomous colleges.

There were 24 universities in 1960. Every year the number of colleges increases almost by 10 per cent, totalling approximately 2,700 in 1966-67 and almost 3,000 in 1967-'68.

### **Christian colleges in India today**

Since Independence the rate of growth of colleges has accelerated especially for the Catholics, now numbering 112. All the Syrian Orthodox colleges were founded in Kerala after Independence. Since Independence the number of Protestant colleges

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29. Joseph Selwyn, J. P. St. J. I. S. Press, Trichy 1922

has remained constant at 45. Of these 13 are run by single denominations and 32 are under united sponsorship.

Enrolment in Christian colleges in India was about 1,17,000 in 1968 or one-tenth of the total number of students in affiliated colleges in the country, and about 7 per cent of all college students. About 39% of students in Christian colleges are Christian, with a much higher percentage in the South and in Assam and in the Catholic colleges. Many Protestant colleges particularly in the North have less than 10% of Christians in their student body. Some Christian colleges have 80 to 90 percent of the total enrolment from the Backward Communities and scheduled castes.

The total staff in Christian colleges in 1968 was approximately 6,300. Of these about 50% are Christian. But in a good number of Protestant colleges there are less than 25% of Christians among the staff.

101 Christian colleges are for liberal arts. 21 are teacher training colleges and 8 are professional colleges. Of the new colleges founded since Independence 35% are teacher training or professional institutions. This marks a significant acceleration of the growth of professional colleges run by Christians. 17 of the teacher training and professional colleges are of Catholic sponsorship, 8 are Protestant and one Syrian.

Kerala has the heaviest concentration of Christian colleges; more than one-third of the total number in India. One of the first Christian colleges in India (the C. M. S. College, Kottayam) was established in Kerala as early as 1816. No other college was established in Kerala before the turn of the century. The second college in Kerala - the Malabar Christian College - was established only in 1909 and the first Catholic college in Kerala - St Thomas Trichur - only in 1919. In the 1920's three colleges, two Protestant and one Catholic, were established. No Christian college was established for a decade. Four Christian colleges, however, came into existence in the 1940's, 19 in the 50's and 9 in the 60's.

## Conclusion

Christian schools and colleges have been pioneers in Indian education, in quality as well as quantity. They have made incalculable contributions to India's self-awareness and development. Christian colleges enjoy a reputation for excellence which enables them to influence educational policy. Throughout the country in a variety of settings they provide every kind of education. There is no other single group of private colleges with this range and scope nor any with as many colleges.

By way of conclusion I only make two suggestions: (1) all those who are in any way connected with Christian higher education in India should make a thorough study of *The Christian College in Developing India - A Sociological Inquiry*, by Richard D. N. Dickinson. (2) ways and means should be found to conduct a similar survey (certainly more difficult) on Christian schools in India. They are today badly in need of planning and co-ordination.

To quote Mr Dickinson: "The network of Christian schools and other institutions means that graduates of Christian colleges can extend into other situations any influences the colleges have been able to impart. This is particularly true of teacher training institutions. The problem of Christian colleges is not that they lack inherent strength or potential influence, but that they have sold this for the pottage of petty bickering, jealousies and tensions of denominational warfare. If this warfare can be ended, Christian colleges can exert a more significant impact upon the real evils which impede India's development."<sup>30</sup>

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30. Dickinson, op. cit. - p. 272.

# The Ceylonese Experience \*

It is over ten years since the schools and training colleges were nationalized in Sri Lanka in January 1961. Presently the issue of the nationalization of schools is being hotly debated or implemented by governments in Asia and Africa. In the Communist countries of Asia education is a monopoly of the state with varying degrees of public participation. In the free-enterprise countries of Asia and Africa the trend is towards a greater social or state control of education, e.g. Burma and Nigeria. Pakistan has already nationalized the schools. In India the socializing of education is increasingly becoming one of practical politics – especially in Kerala. This article is an effort to communicate some of the lessons of our Ceylonese experience – at the request of groups and reviews in India and the Philippines.

## I

### Causes of the Nationalization of Schools in Ceylon

It is no secret that the main target of the Education Acts of 1960 and 1961 was the Catholic School System, even though Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim schools and private schools of other denominations were also affected by them. The Buddhist children were generally in State schools, 906,542 out of 1,363,604 in 1958. The Hindus did not have many good schools. The Muslims had only 9,100 Muslim pupils in Muslim schools. The Christians other than Catholics decided not to contest the Nationalization Bills very vigorously because by 1960 their leadership was convinced that the Christians had to place their trust in the majority made up of Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims. 2,750 schools were thus nationalized of which about 750 were Catholic schools.

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\* Reduced from a paper entitled "Reflections on the Nationalization of the Catholic Schools in Sri Lanka." (Editor)



The reasons for the nationalization of schools may be summarized as follows:

1. The distinct advantage the Christians had in educational opportunities, in employment as traders and in public life.
2. The *State provided most of the funds for education*. The State paid the salaries of teachers in the Assisted Schools under the Free Education Scheme of 1947. From 1951 the State also provided assistance to privately managed schools for facilities such as workshops, laboratories and libraries. By 1960 the State provided most of the funds but the management of 40% of the schools was in the hands of private agencies such as religious bodies. It was natural that the State wanted to increase its control over the whole educational system.
3. The funds were contributed by the State as and when the schools were established and recognized. The Christians had an advantage in this. They obtained *a disproportionate share of the public funds*. In 1939 Christians obtained 75.2% of the expenditure of Government on assisted schools while they were only 9% of the population. The Buddhists who were 66% of the population obtained 19.3% of the funds. During the decennium 1947 to 1956, the expenditure of the government on its own schools increased by 86.7%, while the expenditure of the government on assisted schools increased by 274.3%. The increase in the number of pupils on the rolls during the same period was, however, 74.5% in respect of government schools, and 59.6% in respect of assisted schools<sup>1</sup>.
4. In the process of the subsidizing of education, public funds were used largely in areas where Christians had established schools. The religious bodies had the initiative in establishing schools. Once they did so the State had to provide the funds. Christians had an advantage in this owing to the thrift and pooling of resources, especially of the religious, the assistance from abroad and the generosity of the local Christian communities. This meant that, in fact, better schools were established in the

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1. J. E. Jayasuriya : *Education in Ceylon before and after Independence*, Colombo, 1969, p. 45

urban areas where Christians congregated and in the districts which had more Christians such as the Western Coast and Jaffna. The *hinterland of Ceylon was neglected* for this and other reasons. This trend was partly arrested by the Government's prohibition, in 1947, of the setting up of new schools by any other agency than the State.

5. There were accusations of proselytization in certain schools. The Buddhist Commission sittings gave much publicity to such charges and fears.

6. The segregation by religion that took place in large number of schools was not conducive to national unity.

7. The Government desired to make a more co-ordinated use of resources instead of proliferating schools in some areas according to religious denominations and neglecting others. Government wanted to set up what it called a *Unified National System of Education*. This would include a more rational amalgamation of schools where there were too many, and the reduction of waste and competition.

8. The Government wanted to push its programme of education in the *Swabasha*, of making opportunities available to talent, of co-ordinating methods of education, of giving a greater national consciousness to the children. In all these it found an obstacle in the independence of the denominational schools which had a way of often propagating other values. Thus the Christians were at first reluctant to accept Sinhala and Tamil as the media of instruction; they were against free education as proposed by the government; their schools tended to be ghetto schools which segregated their children from the others.

9. Many *teachers* in private schools – including Christian schools – favoured the take-over because they were not too happy with the conditions of employment in these schools. This was especially so in the rural areas where they felt dominated not only by the school principals but also by the managers, i. e. the local parish priests. Nationalization meant they would get better opportunities for further education and advancement. They felt that in Christian (especially Catholic) schools the management gave undue preference to religious and clergy in appointments and promotions to the

disadvantage of the laity. It was therefore understandable that even many Catholic teachers supported the nationalization of schools as a measure for their own betterment.

10. Another bone of contention was the religious education of the children. In this the Catholic leadership was quite intransigent in insisting that Catholic children could be taught their religion only *within the Catholic school environment*. They refused to accept the teaching of Catholic religion to Catholic children in Government schools. This was partly due to a fear of their losing their hold on the Catholic parents as regards the sending of their children to Catholic schools even at some cost. The Catholic Leadership also refused to permit any other religion to be taught within the premises of a Catholic school. Our view was that other religions were false and we should be guilty of at least a material co-operation in the propagation of error. This particularly irritated the Buddhists who had nearly 120,000 children in Christian schools supported by the State, but they were unable to ensure a Buddhist education or instruction to these children

11. The Government felt that the Catholics were an obstacle to more progressive measures in society. At the time the distinction between Communist and Socialist trends was not so clear. The Catholic leadership tended to oppose even socialistic or egalitarian measures such as the introduction of free education and the nationalization of certain services and industries. The Catholics were a significant power bloc in society. They were accused of being organized as "*Catholic Action*" to foster their own interests in subservience to the Pope.

12. a) The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (S. D. F. P.) then thought of Catholic group or leadership as consistently opposed to them. They were of the view that the Catholic School System was a source of the Church's strength as well as of its social conservatism. Hence their desire to destroy this obstacle or power base which gave the impression that the Church was allied to the right wing, the United National Party - U. N. P.

b) The Maxist parties which were in coalition (at least electorally) with the more socialist S. L. F. P. saw in the Catholic leadership the most determined, most shrewd and best organized articulate

opposition to their plans of establishing a Marxist regime in Ceylon. Hence they too joined in the attack on the Catholic School System.

13. The nationalization of schools was part of a *long-term trend in Ceylon towards a more egalitarian society*. Universal adult franchise exercised since 1931 and the gaining of political independence in 1948 meant that there would be pressures to change the structure of society in favour of the poorer classes. The private schools were a bulwark of upper class privilege in society and hence the democratic, socialistic trends were bound at some stage to assert themselves against the entrenched positions of the upper 10% of Ceylon society that dominated the masses.

## II

### Consequences of the Nationalization of Schools in Ceylon

#### A. From the national point of view

The Government has a greater opportunity of planning and executing educational reorganization. Previously almost every policy of the Government such as free education and the *Swabasha* medium of instruction was contested by the denominational schools. Many years were spent before a policy could be implemented. It is now possible for the Department of Education to reduce unnecessary duplication of schools where re-grouping is feasible. This has been done in certain areas.

There is greater equality of opportunity in education among the racial and religious groups and between the rural and urban areas. The Central Schools provide facilities for a high-quality second level education in the social studies and humanities in the rural areas. However it is the richer classes in the cities, especially in the Colombo and Jaffna districts, that have access to the better schools. In spite of the policies of successive governments concerning free education, the vernacular medium and the take-over of the schools, such of them as are patronized by the upper classes have maintained their distinctive character. They have better teachers, facilities for libraries and laboratories and English



medium courses for admission to the universities in the Faculties of Medicine, Engineering, Veterinary Science and Agriculture. Graduates of these 'privileged' Faculties have more lucrative jobs open to them, whereas those qualifying from other schools of Arts and Social Sciences are often condemned to a rather long period of unemployment.

The *class bias* of Ceylon society has asserted itself, against popular pressures and legislative enactments. There is a large disparity in the expenditure of Government itself on schools in different areas. In November 1966 the teacher salary costs per pupil at Royal College, Colombo was Rs 24. 86 cts, at Girls' High School, Kandy, Rs 16. 61 cts. and at Maha Vidyalaya, Teripehe Rs 4. 74 cts<sup>2</sup>.

From this point of view the impact of the take-over of the schools has not been very pronounced on the class structure of our society. It has been greater on the religious groups because the government can spread out education more evenly. This spread is more quantitative than qualitative. High quality education is still restricted to the affluent as far as the more 'privileged' university Faculties are concerned. All the same the trend is towards greater equality of opportunity and the way is open for popular pressure and political leadership to realize it<sup>3</sup>.

The schools on the tea and rubber estates were not nationalized perhaps because they affected, primarily, the Indian Tamil population. The children of the estate labourers have much less chance of education than the rest of the country. About 39% of the children on the estates do not attend school at all, whereas the all-island average is 17.5%<sup>4</sup>.

Once the problems of the medium of instruction, free education and the ownership and management of education are resolved the Department will be able to give attention to

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2. J. E. Jayasuriya: *op. cit.* p. 86

3. See G. Uswatte Aratchy: "From Highway to Blind Alley" in *Marga* Vol. 1. No. 3 pp. 75-85

4. *Preliminary Report of the Socio-Economic Survey of Ceylon, 1969-70*: Dept. of Censuses and Statistics, Colombo, Table 7.

reorientation of the content of education to suit our socio-economic needs.

Once the schools had been taken over the *religious tension* between Christians and Buddhists *decreased considerably*. In fact the way was open for its disappearance as we can now see after 12 years. During the past 7 years since 1965 there has been no serious tension on a religious basis in spite of a general election, a change of government and the youth insurrection of 1971. If this problem of the privileged position of the Christian schools had not been resolved we might still have been subject to inter-religious animosities.

The nation's children are now more in contact with each other across the boundaries of religions. The teachers are also likewise diversified. This is an advantage in terms of nation building. *The ghettos of religion have been reduced*, though those of class continue and those of race may even have been intensified.

Uniformity in the ownership and management of education can impede creative experimentation. The existence of some private schools can have a value from an educational point of view, though unfortunately they are mainly geared towards service of the privileged upper tenth of the society.

Most teachers being government employees are less free politically, though they are better off financially and in other conditions of service. Political interference in education is greater than before.

Government expenditure on education has increased, leaving less for other development projects including educational diversification. The public voluntary contribution to education has been reduced as the structures for 'grass-roots' participation, such as school welfare boards and parent teacher associations, have not been sufficiently developed.

The over-all problem of the social and collective motivation of education has not been given much attention. *The values of the educational system* are still individualistic and competitive; they tend to favour the rich and the affluent Sinhala and Tamil

families to the detriment of the poor in the cities and rural areas and the Indian estate labourers. The attention of the country has been more concerned with the medium of instruction, finances, ownership, management and now the curriculum. The underlying values of the educational system from the point of view of basic motivation of the individual in society remain to be dealt with. We have still to face the issue of education for a genuinely socialistic society.

## B. The consequences for the Catholic Church

The immediate short-term impact of the 'giving in by the hierarchy', as it was called, was a sense of complete bewilderment among the Catholics, specially those who had led the resistance movement. For months they had been provoked to resist the take-over. Then suddenly, without their being consulted, the struggle and the schools were given up. The loyal Catholics were so stunned that they did not know where to turn. On the other hand those who had (silently) supported the Government seemed to carry the day. This was a shock to the faith of the simple Catholics both concerning the insistence of the Church authorities on the need for Catholic schools and on their capacity to lead a struggle.

Long used to implicit obedience, they gave up the resistance on the order of the bishops. They had to eat humble pie and make do as well as possible under the new dispensation. The distress of the poorer people was all the greater when they learnt that the Grades I and II secondary and primary schools, generally frequented by the richer classes were to be retained by the Church as private and non-fee levying, while their grade III schools were to be handed over to the State. It looked as if the class bond was stronger than that of faith. The answer of the leadership was that they were salvaging what was possible out of the universal wreckage.

There was a great sense of *frustration among Catholics*. We had to give up institutions which had been built up painfully during a period of over 100 years. We felt that the work of the Church was being destroyed. 'What next?' was our worry. Were these steps towards an eventual Marxist take-over? We found ourselves isolated, defenceless and defeated. We did not know

where to turn. We could no longer rely on the traditional bases of our strength: the institutions.

At the same time there was opposition to the foreign missionaries and nursing sisters. The services of nuns in the government hospitals were terminated; foreign missionaries were given notice that they would have to leave the island in the near future. Almost daily there was criticism of the Catholics in the press and often in Parliament and even on the walls of the city. Things looked very gloomy.

It was only gradually that we began a *process of re-thinking and re-adjustment*. The immediate concerns were the teaching of religion to children in the nationalized schools and financial support for the 47 Grade I and II schools which had opted to be 'private and non-fee levying'. The latter difficulty was met by the organization of Welfare Committees of parents and well-wishers who undertook to collect voluntary donations, generally in respect of the children in these schools. After some years this problem is now under control though it has proved to be a major burden on the Catholics, especially in the urban areas.

It was the question of teaching religion to children that made us review our whole catechetical apostolate. The Government provided for a few periods of *religious instruction* in all schools for any group of over 15 children from the same religion. The teacher of religion was to be one approved by the authority of the religion concerned. Legally and theoretically this was a position which in some way was better than the previous position: it made it possible to teach the several religions in each school, and Christians could teach their pupils in any school anywhere in the country. We were thus helped out of our ghetto, and provision was made for the presence of Christian teachers in any area of Ceylon.

Owing to this crisis we began to review our own teaching of religion. We came in contact with the modern catechetical revival in the world. The Church in Ceylon had been long closed to new theological currents except since 1955 in the National Seminary. We had to look round now for new insights and orientations. The visit of Fr Johannes Hoffinger, S. J. of the



Catechetical Centre in Manila was of great help at this moment. He presented both the content of the new thinking as it was around 1962 and the methods and literature concerning catechesis.

The *Catechetical Movement* was the first organized effort to deal with the take-over of the schools. Numerous courses and seminars on catechesis were conducted, especially at Aquinas University College. Fr Peter Pillai who had been a leading defender of the Catholic School System showed a remarkable fertility of ideas and vision in grasping the meaning of the situation and pushing ahead with the catechetical reorientation. Priests and religious were sent abroad to Europe, India and Manila to be trained in catechesis. The dioceses set up centres for catechesis and gradually released more full-timers for it. New text-books were printed in Sinhala and Tamil. Catechetical camps were held for teachers and school children.

In the process we discovered how little our catechesis had been adapted to the core of the Christian revelation, and for several decades, if not centuries, at that. *We began to rediscover the gospel*, the centrality of love (and not law) in the revelation of Christ. We saw that though we had had the schools in our hands we had not necessarily catechized the children. On the contrary the very building and management of schools had distracted us from deeper theological study and reflection. Our more competent priests, religious and laity had specialized in subjects which were necessary for leadership in 'secular' education, namely in Biology, Mathematics, History and Literature. Thus we were becoming alienated from our fundamental task of presenting the faith and building living Christian communities. Our best talent we used up in administration of schools rather than in religious education and animation.

It was in the week-end courses, camps and holiday sessions that priests and religious came to know better the real thinking, problems and aspirations of the children. The take-over of the schools thus helped us to see that we were not really teaching the faith so effectively. We had mistaken buildings for communities, ownership for environment, management for motivation, and instruction for education. The process of our catechetical renewal is still going on - 12 years after the take-over. An institute for

training catechists has been set up in Negombo. We are still far from being able to reach all the Catholic children for religious education in a satisfactory manner. We have gone through a rude but wholesome reawakening and are the better for it.

The Catholic pupils in the government schools i. e. about 80% of the total number, are not so easily contacted as those in the private non-fee levying schools. The religious who continued as teachers in the State schools are now retiring one by one on account of the age limit (55 years). Religious brothers and sisters are not so easily appointed to teaching posts as before. Lay teachers do not readily take to the teaching of religion, which is not as well organized in the public schools as is desirable. In certain areas, especially those where Catholics are few in number, the children are growing up in a certain amount of ignorance of the faith; some Catholic children offer Buddhism as a subject for their public examinations. These changes pose tasks for parents, pastors and teachers of religion, and *considerable* worry among Catholics. They are also likely to have an impact on vocation in the priestly and religious life.

In addition to catechetics, the religious education of children will have to depend greatly on parish life, and on lay movements and the impact of the Christian community through mass media. These are serious challenges to the entire Christian community, and the answers to them are to be sought more in life than in mere educational institutions or programmes.

There are some *advantages* that have been derived from the nationalization of the schools. The children now get a better national sense. Catholics are kept less in a ghetto, and have friends of other religions especially the children who study in public schools.

*The priests and religious* who had their schools nationalized find themselves relieved of the responsibility of finding funds for running the schools. It is true that they are not so easily made principals of schools; they are not 'the establishment' in the field of education. But teachers in earlier times tended to be rather 'anti clerical' because the priests and religious were generally their bosses and employers. Now all are together in the

same boat as state employees. There is further liberation in that religious congregations are now more free to use their personnel for more necessary tasks such as catechesis, liturgy and social action. Their training has also been accordingly widened and theologically deepened.

The religious have less security of income as fewer of them are teachers now. Hence they have a problem of ensuring a living. They have also had to rethink their apostolate and style of living. Some of them have taken to works of development; some live in small communities in rural areas. It is easier in Ceylon to make such options than in countries where the institutional responsibilities are greater. We have now a *greater nobility and mental flexibility* among religious, especially our 2,500 nuns.

Those religious engaged in education have an alternative employer in the Department of Education. This is an enlightening experience, for it is found that the service of religious are sometimes better appreciated by government officials and lay head teachers, than they were, in express terms, by their own religious superiors. Those religious who leave their congregations – and there are few who do so – do not lose their jobs.

Quite a number of the younger generation of religious, i. e. those below 35 years or so, are now more concerned about a response to social issues – development, poverty, social justice and the radical trends among youth – than about institutional service in schools. The 'Schools Take-Over' has helped liberate them, and leave them free to think out and resolve these issues. The still younger religious now in formation are mainly the fruit of the nationalized school system. Their English and their religious knowledge may not be very good, but their sense of the country, and their concern for social justice and appreciation of social values, are better.

In all these directions, the religious who were a significant section in the educational work of the institutionalized Church are experiencing a new situation with many challenges and advantages as well.

Twelve years after these events we can now see how the entire issue of the nationalization of the schools was a turning-point in the history of the Catholic Church in Ceylon. Of itself it did not give positive new orientations, but negatively it clearly indicated to us certain approaches that had to be given up. We came to realize how much opposition and ill-will our hard work and dedication had generated among the people of our country. We had to seek deeper for the causes of this failure in communication and comprehension.

All in all, as far as the Church is concerned, we have now forgotten the wounds of 1960 - 61. We have learnt to accommodate ourselves to the Left-inclined government, including Marxist ministers. Though we still have serious problems of religious education, most of us now regard the 'Schools Take-over' as a *providential liberation* from an over-institutionalization that is not suitable for our times. This does not however diminish our appreciation of the heroic service and sacrifice of the pioneers of the past without whose work we would not be where we are. Their labours have now a more universal significance.

We now find that the Church as a body is more free to participate in the more pressing task of socio-economic liberation in the country. Some are even becoming critical of the entire fabric of formal education - specially its basic individualistic, competitive value system. Radical and even revolutionary trends are gaining ground specially among the young in Sri Lanka.

It is now necessary to ask ourselves whether the creative area for an impact on youth is formal education or rather *non-formal education* especially through free associations of youth and through mass media. We should seriously consider whether formal education is not in itself a conditioning process whereby the younger generation are made to conform mentally to the values of adults, and the poor to those of the affluent. Is education a mis-education of the young Ceylonese, which makes them not only to some extent unemployable but also compels them to conform to individualistic values and competition in our so-called socialistic society? How far are religious establishments used by the socio-economic system for this process? Is formal education performing for present society, including its neo-



colonialism, the sort of brain-conditioning function which it did during the centuries of colonialism? It is not intended to discuss these here, they need to be inquired into.

The Catholic Church as an institution – though generally on the side of the *status quo* does not feel so frightened of radical social change as it was 12 to 15 years ago. A few Catholics are even in the vanguard of the radical movements. The people have moved ahead. In many aspects the nationalization of the schools has been a valuable though traumatic experience of dispossession with a liberating impact on the Church.

In retrospect we realize that our positions were decided and defended by us in isolation. We were not really in dialogue with the vast majority in the country. We did not listen to the message which came to us from the political leaders, the editors of the Sinhalese newspapers, the Buddhist monks and lay leaders. We were not attuned to understanding and appreciating the surge of mass aspirations built up by such leadership. *Dialogue* was not a word that was even in our vocabulary then. We did not realize how much the position motivated by faith and religious concerns actually coincided with the self-interest of a privileged sociological minority. We mistook egalitarian trends for an attack on the faith. The experience has made us collectively wiser.

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# State Control and Christian Education in the West

The almost total state control of education in the West today can be understood only when viewed historically. The State's interest in education and its attempts to control the life and formation of the youth are not of yesterday's origin. They have a history, whose known roots reach back to ancient Sparta.

The slow emergence of national States with the resultant spirit of nationalism and the rapid and almost universal process of secularization with its attendant effect, secularism, are the two important causes of the nationalization of education in the West.

## **History of the state control of education in the West, the pre-Christian back ground**

As humanity slowly emerged from its tribal culture and as life began to be more and more centred in the city States, education too lost its tribal character and assumed organized and institutional forms. Along with the growth of the city States, the role of politics and of political institutions grew in importance. Education too became political in content and form.

As matter of fact in the history of western education, it was the State of Sparta with its imposing and efficient military dictatorship, that for the first time exercised total control over education. Since military efficiency was the paramount aim of Spartan life, every child not only belonged to the State, but its entire formation was geared and supervised to this end.

It is a fact of history that ever since the time of Sparta, every totalitarian regime has taken all the means available to control completely and exclusively the lives and formation of its youth. Only thus could it maintain and develop itself. The Athenian aim of education, unlike that of Sparta, was to develop a cultured

soul in a graceful and healthy body. 'Nothing in excess' was the Athenian maxim of life. In the early period of Athenian history the obligation of providing education for the children rested chiefly with the parents. It was only when the vitality of the early Athenian democracy began to weaken under the attacks of totalitarian Sparta, that the Athenians were shocked into the realization that the State had to take effective active control of education, in order to remain free. Plato and Aristotle regarded education and politics as inseparable. For both these great thinkers the ideal of education remained the training of good men and good citizens. At the same time they pleaded for the control of education by the State.

In the 3rd and 2nd centuries B. C. military training became compulsory for all Greek citizens. But we have no evidence to show that either the city States, or even the Macedonian empire exercised total and exclusive control over education.

Most of the later Greek educational institutions were founded and financed by kings. But they do not seem to have developed any systematic philosophy of education. This is true of Rome also. Early Roman education, like that of Athens, was all done in the family and aimed at inducting the children into the customs and life-patterns of society. It was only under the Empire, that the rulers and the municipal authorities started first to patronize and then gradually to control education. But we can hardly speak of an imperial policy of education.

As we analyse the reasons for the state control of education in pre-Christian Sparta, Athens and Rome, we find that nationalism in its broadest sense was the leading motive. The Athenians, Spartans and Romans lived in sacred societies. But their desire to preserve their national identity and its values, brought them to realize the state's effective role in the field of education.

### **Christian Europe**

Christianity was born into a world, whose cultural forms were largely Hellenic and whose political institutions were Roman. At the same time the Judeo-Christian revelation affirmed the abso-

lute supremacy of faith over all the other aspects of life, be it individual, social or political.

Christ, who was called a Rabbi and who spent his public life teaching and preaching, impressed on his followers the duty of proclaiming the 'good news' to all. In the self-revelation of God in Christ, man is given a new and transcendent vision of his nature, and the meaning and goal of his existence. The community of Christians, or the Church, commissioned by God to preach this 'newness' to all men, was from its very inception naturally interested in the 'formation of men.'

In the early period, when the powerful Roman empire was still non-Christian, Catholic education was private and centred on providing religious instruction to children and to converts. But as more and more educated men became Christians 'pagan learning' began to be cultivated for the explicit purpose of absorbing the truths of the Greco-Roman tradition into Christianity. The catechetical schools of Alexandria and Antioch for example, provided their students not only with religious education, but also with the best available secular learning of the time.

Tertullian's extremely negative attitude to the 'wisdom of the pagans' as expressed in his famous dictum: 'What is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem?', was surely not typical of the great early Fathers of the Church. With the victory of Constantine and his conversion to Christianity, the persecuted religion of Christ became the religion of the empire. From then on, the Church was able to consolidate and expand her educational and kerygmatic mission with greater freedom. In the growing consciousness of her mission she came to recognize learning and education as needed aids and means to salvation and perfection, as well as to the humanization and Christianization of man and society.

The period between 400 and 900 AD was crucial in the development of Christian education in the West. The empire was crumbling under barbarian attacks, chaos prevailed in the Germanic kingdoms and the light of learning was well-nigh extinguished in the European world. Only the Church, with her monasteries and episcopal sees, stood out as an effective bulwark of hope,



continuity and creativity. The growing involvement of the Church in the field of education can be seen from the fact that during this period by the side of the existing monastic schools, she established episcopal or cathedral schools, parish schools and song schools. The ecumenical council of Constantinople decreed that all parish priests should establish schools and teach the children in their parishes.

Though the Christian religion was the chief content of early Christian education, the curriculum was slowly enlarged to include grammar, classical literature and even some aspects of Greek science.

Under Charlemagne (742-814) an important educational revival took place in the West. This great king found that only by means of education would he be able to realize his political dream of gathering all the Germanic peoples into a single great Christian empire. It must be noted, however, that, though it was the Emperor who took the initiative and gave the prestigious authority of his name to this educational revival, the planning of the curriculum and the actual running of the institutions remained fully in the hands of the Church.

By the 11th century Europe reached a state of comparative political stability and social peace. With the entrance of the 'barbarians' into the fold of the Church, the authority of the Church in matters of faith, morals and education was unquestioningly accepted.

Contact with the East through trade and through the Crusades and the influence of the highly cultured and scientific-minded Moors contributed much to advance the cause of education still further. Scholasticism was the highest intellectual achievement of the medieval Church, and the universities were the greatest institutional expressions of her centuries-long educational endeavour. Since in the 12th and 13th centuries, the Church had full control over education, and was at the same time very conscious of her teaching mission, she made the establishment of an effective system of education one of her principal tasks. Solicitude at the centre (Rome) did not produce complete centralization of education. The local bishops, the parishes and even each school and

university had a great measure of freedom in the planning and organization of their educational schemes. The Church however tried to preserve her absolute authority over education by allowing only those to teach who had a licence from the local bishop or his delegate (Scholasticus or Chancellor).

During the 14th, 15th and the early part of the 16th centuries the spirit of the Renaissance swept over Europe and paved the way for the Reformation and the rise of national states. The key to the understanding of the Renaissance is to be found in the growing secularism of the times. The increasing emphasis on the secular aspect of life can be seen in their political, economic and even religious institutions.

Political institutions became more and more secular in theory and practice. The Holy Roman Empire was definitely on the decline, and England and France grew rapidly into independent national states. Politicians and educationalists like Pierre Dubois and Marsiglio of Padua boldly attacked both the secular authority and the ambitions of the Church.

The Babylonian captivity of the Popes (1309-1377), the general corruption that covered the Church like a black veil, the Wycliffite and Hussite revolts from inside the ranks of the clergy, with their nationalistic overtones, considerably weakened the secular and even the spiritual authority of the Church in general, and of the Papacy in particular.

Through the influence of the Arabs, the West began to take greater interest in the natural sciences. The decadent and abstract scholasticism of this period became the target of attacks from the great Renaissance humanists and thus brought disrepute on ecclesiastical learning. Scientists turned away from religious traditions and applied themselves to the investigation of nature by means of empirical and inductive methods. It is true that the Renaissance did not produce any astounding scientific developments; all the same it laid the groundwork and formulated the methods for such developments, so that restraints of religion on natural science slowly weakened.

The seeds of antagonism between the new humanism and the Catholic faith and practices were not immediately visible to all.

But the climate created by the Renaissance slowly caused them to grow and finally to bear such fruit as the Reformation, and the definitive consolidation of distinct state and national powers, which once for all put an end to the idea of a European Christendom having the Pope at its head. Other seeds sown by the Renaissance gave rise also to constitutionalism, to civil liberties, and to the mushroom growth of the 'new rich' in power and influence.

In the domain of education, the Renaissance made some changes in its contents and methods, but gained no control over the set-up and the working. The Church still maintained her unique position in this matter. But the Reformation and the political and social revolutions had tremendous repercussions. The confiscation of ecclesiastical properties made it necessary to close many schools or left them more dead than alive. The principle *cujus regio ejus religio* gave power to the rulers to impose their particular Christian denomination on the schools of their region.

The Reformers launched the idea of universal education. This led to the interference of the State which alone could enforce and finance it. The Reformation Churches, moreover, gradually became State Churches, whose bishops were appointed by the State. Being so much under the control of the State, the Churches could not exercise any independent action without the *placet* of the secular authorities. Between 1599 and 1642 the various German States passed several laws which brought education more and more under their general supervision. Calvin's theocratic idea that the State is essentially an arm of the Church gradually brought about the civil control of education where it prevailed. Historians of education now quite frankly admit that besides dividing Christianity the Reformation was also instrumental in promoting the control of education by the State.

The next great movement, which shaped the course of Western Education was the Enlightenment, the "Great Awakening", a radical reaction against the absolute and authoritarian regimes of the Reformation and a protest of reason against its suppression by the fideistic tendencies of Protestantism. Absolute monarchy, religious dogmatism, and unscientific world-views came under attack. This negative reaction was prompted by the Enlightenment's

growing faith in science, in reason, and in the common man (as opposed to the privileged few). Natural science, which entered the West through Arabic translations of Greek works, did not really take indigenous roots till unscientific and *a priori* conceptions of the world were rejected. The development of science, and the consequent unravelling of the mysteries of the world and control of the hidden forces of nature, was largely responsible for creating a secularist mentality. The education imparted by the various Churches had aimed principally at producing religious men. Its content was predominantly religious, its general framework authoritarian, and its methods abstract. However, from the time of the Renaissance, this ecclesiastical view of education underwent radical changes. The Renaissance humanists insisted that education should take into consideration the 'whole man' and not exclusively his religious dimension, and that it should utilize empirical, inductive methods. The stress on the factual and the relevant in the practical order, and on progress in discovering the truth of the world, without, of course, losing sight of the religious and moral aspect of man, found champions in such great educationists as Comenius, Bacon, and Locke. Rousseau's romantic naturalism stressed the importance of helping children to grow and develop naturally. His theory that nature is wholly good and hence should not be hampered by too much discipline, helped to destroy the authoritarian systems prevalent in his day. His ideas on education, revolutionary as they were, do not fully accord with Christian principles which recognize in human nature the wound of sin. Even modern psycho-analysis does not fully accept Rousseau's naturalism. All the same his influence on the course of education in the West was incalculable. The great educational theorists, Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Froebel (1782-1852), J. Dewey (1859-1952) and Montessori (1870-1952) were likewise in some way influenced by naturalistic tendencies. They wanted education to be the great instrument of social reform. During the 19th and 20th centuries, academic freedom, or the freedom to do research and to teach without any outside influence, whether secular or religious, was demanded by the higher institutions of learning. At the same time with the rapid progress of the natural sciences, a certain empirical mentality spread through the West. Within this background, let us see how the State gradually exerted greater and greater control over education.



In the Prussia of the Enlightenment period, the rulers, under the influence and guidance of Protestant educationists Francke and Hecker promulgated school codes which at first stopped with prescribing curriculums, text books and the required qualifications of teachers. In 1787 however F. William II took the task of the supervision of schools from the hands of the Church and put it in the hands of a state ministry of education. In Prussia church schools were allowed to continue but they had to adhere strictly to the requirements of the State. In connection with the *Kulturkempt* (the struggles between the State and the Catholic Church during the time of Bismarck) the State, by a law (1872), reasserted its absolute right to supervise schools. Even today schools are under the Ministry of Education of each State and are secular in character.

It was in France that the idea that the State should control education was first revived. L. R. de la Chaltois (1801-85) in his *Essay on National Education*, not only criticized the education imparted by the Jesuits, but ventured to claim for the nation an education which depended only on the State because it is essentially its matter.

Napoleon in 1808 created the 'Universite de France', which is not a University but a Government Department under a Rector responsible for the administration of education. Though Napoleon left primary education under the care of the Church and the Communes, still in 1880 by law, primary education was made compulsory, free and secular. In England, the *laissez faire* attitude in every field of life made the State hesitate to intervene in educational affairs. At the beginning of the 19th Century education was considered entirely the concern of private enterprise. Through slow but progressive legislation, elementary education was made compulsory and free by the end of the century. But secondary education remained mostly in the hands of voluntary and religious organizations. The universities were and are autonomous, but depend greatly on the state for financial aid.

### **The twentieth century**

In the 20th century, State control over education only increased. The ideologies of Communism, Nazism and Fascism found their fullest expression during this century. With the almost miraculous

achievements of science, and the process of secularization that was affecting every facet of individual and social life, secularism also spread. Nationalism is another factor to be reckoned with while considering the question of State control over education in the West. Education at the primary level was made compulsory and free. This meant that without State aid it was impossible for schools to carry out their duties. The growth of science meant enormous outlay in education, especially in the establishment of laboratories, libraries and in personnel. Higher education became a matter of specialization that called for men and money which neither the Church nor other private agencies could easily supply. At the same time with the growth of man's sense of freedom and of democratic ideals, educational agencies especially at the higher levels became very sensitive to any interference from outside agencies, especially from religious authorities.

Yet at no other time in Europe's history do we find such massive State interference in the sphere of education as in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and in the Communist countries. Education from the primary to the university level became State-owned and State-controlled. Though lip-service was and still is paid to academic freedom, the States have used education for inculcating their respective ideologies in the minds of their children. What we witnessed in Sparta was and has been re-enacted in the 20th century in Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and in the Communist countries.

Now both Fascism and Nazism have disappeared. But Communism still holds sway in Russia and in the East European countries. In Western Europe today, the universities are mostly either under the control of the Education Ministry of each State or under a separate board with authority to supervise their actual functioning. At the same time universities enjoy great autonomy in their academic life. Secondary education too is mostly under State control, though private and denominational schools are even now to be found in Germany, France and other countries. But they have to follow strictly the rules and regulations of the State. In fact, both in Germany and in France, private secondary schools are gradually disappearing.

In England private voluntary schools have not been abolished. By an Act of 1944 'private schools' fall into different categories. A voluntary private school is called 'an aided school' in which the managers appoint the teachers and have responsibility for religious instruction (according to the denomination of the students). The management must meet half the cost of structural improvement and repairs. A private school is a controlled school, when the local educational authority is responsible wholly for the cost of structural improvement and maintenance though the management or governors have certain rights for the appointment of teachers and for religious instruction. According to some writers, England by compromise and persuasion has found a balanced solution to the thorny problem of the rights of the State, of private agencies, and of parents regarding education.

In the colonial days in America, education began and flourished as a private, religious enterprise. But later common school and public school movements were first of all an effort to make the strictly denominational schools more acceptable to Protestants of different denominations and to Catholics. Universal free schooling for all, and the need of welding together various religious and national groups into one nation were also adduced as reasons for common or public schools supported by public funds and controlled by the State. But the public school system has never succeeded in completely suppressing the private or parochial educational institutions. In 1922 the Oregon legislature passed a law requiring every child to attend public schools between the age of eight and eighteen. But in 1925 the U. S. Supreme Court ruled the law unconstitutional. In the opinion of the court, the child is the creation of the parents rather than of the State and so they have a right to educate him in the institution they deem best.

Historically the root causes of the present situation were inner Protestant rivalries, Protestant-Catholic prejudices and antagonisms, and the need of welding together the different linguistic and religious groups of immigrants into one nation as well as the rise and influence of secularist educationalists and politicians who identified religion and religious practices with fanaticism and divisiveness. Today, in the changed social, political, and above all religious conditions, Americans are seriously questioning the propriety and

even the very defensibility of the official position. Is not the refusal of the State to aid private schools, a policy of indirectly forcing individuals to conform to the human values of public schools as a condition of having a share in the tax funds which they themselves have paid to the State? Is this not a form of thought control unworthy of any true democracy? Every historian of education will agree that diversity in education is a pre-requisite of freedom of thought and of inquiry. This is demanded by a pluralistic and democratic society. By refusing to aid private schools, the State denies, in an indirect manner, the inviolable rights of individuals and society. Since secularism is the official attitude of the public, government-supported schools, only those who are prepared to let their children be introduced into the world view can enjoy the benefits of public money. Is this just? One out of every seven students, passes through a private school. This means that the private schools are doing a service to society, which in justice demands the aid of the State from the available public funds.

Though most of the American Christian educationists are quite conscious of the innate danger involved in complete State control of education, still none of them want the Churches through religious grants to have a complete monopoly of education. At any stage of man's development, no particular Church or religion should have complete control of education. But the good of education in days to come will depend on the search for ways of so combining State control with private enterprise and initiative as to guarantee, on the one hand, freedom of thought and research, and on the other hand, national and international unity in diversity. Education is the best way to expand freedom to its full depth and extension. This is possible only if the State can guarantee freedom to individuals and groups to look for the education they need within the nation. This is the search that is going on in many of the democratic States of the West today.



## Book Review

**WAYS OF SALVATION** by Kurien Kunnumpuram  
(Pontifical Athenaeum, Poona 14, 1971, pp. 114; Price: Indian Rs. 9/-, Foreign \$ 2/-)

As the subtitle of the book reads this is an enquiry into "The Salvific Meaning of Non-Christian Religions according to the Teaching of Vatican II." The author does not claim that Vatican II worked out a complete theology of Non-Christian religions. What he tries to do is to collect from the different Vatican documents all the elements for a theology of Religions.

Father Kunnumpuram examines at great length the development of Catholic teaching on non-Christians before Vatican II. The Church's attitude was defined by two basic principles apparently opposed to each other, one the universal salvific will of God, and the other the necessity of the Church for salvation. In reconciling these two principles the Fathers of the Church made a clear distinction between the time before Christ and the time after Christ: Before the coming of Christ there was the universal possibility of salvation; but after the coming of Christ there was hesitancy to admit the possibility of salvation outside the Church. St Thomas Aquinas emphasized more the universal salvific will of God, and said that God would even miraculously intervene in order to make the means of salvation available to all. But the whole theological discussion down the centuries centred round the adage "No salvation outside the Church." St Ignatius of Antioch used the statement against schism. St Irenaeus gave a wide meaning to it. "...Where there is the Spirit of God, there you have the Church." St Cyprian with his pre-occupation with the Donatists and the controversy on re-baptism

of those who were baptized by the heretics gave a rigid interpretation to the statement with his reference to the house of Rahab. One cannot have God as his Father who has not the Church as his mother, and Origen followed suit: "Outside this house, that is outside the Church, no one is saved." Though Cyprian's re-baptism theory was rejected by the Church his rigour in the interpretation of "No salvation outside the Church" was followed by a good number of the Fathers, and the principle was repeated by a number of Popes and Councils. Pope Pius IX called it 'a perfectly well-known Catholic Dogma.' The general supposition was that the pagans remained so by their own fault, and that the heretics and schismatics formally rejected the Church. But no one wanted to condemn and deny salvation to the inculpably ignorant of the Church. To explain the salvation of these many authors had recourse to the argument of belonging to the Church *in voto*. Some spoke of pertaining to the soul of the Church though not to its body and yet others to being members of the Church invisibly. Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* said that these "who do not belong to the visible Body of the Catholic Church" may "by an unconscious desire and longing have a certain relationship with the Mystical Body of the Redeemer."

The author then tries to bring out the new perspective that developed through the various schemas of the *Lumen Gentium* and other documents of Vatican II. The most fundamental shift is from a preoccupation with the individual's salvation and the conception of the Church as a means of salvation *vis à-vis* other religions to the consideration of the relevance of different socio-religious groups to the community of the Church. Thus the non-Catholic Churches and Ecclesial Communities come closest to the Church by the community of Baptism, the Scriptures, belief in God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the various Sacraments. Then come the Jews and the Muslims, and more remote are those who seek an unknown God. These different groups have a definite place in the divine plan of salvation. A second change in outlook is that there is no longer a juridical and static conception of membership in the Church but rather the dynamic view of incorporation in Christ. Thirdly in the place of a negative characterization of religions as "non-Christian", there is a positive discussion that considers them as provid-

ing men with knowledge of the fundamental truths of religion, and making, in the process, unique contributions of their own. Discussing the salvation of the non-Christians the Council has restricted the "*Votum Ecclesiae*" to the Catechumens. Others "who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience", can attain to eternal salvation. Here it is not question of a purely internal striving in spite of their religious traditions, but rather their religious life taken as a whole (*Ad Gentes...*). Yet the Church remains the "universal sacrament" of salvation, the definitive expression of God's will to save all men. Without knowing her and respecting her no one can be saved.

In the second chapter of the book the author presents a theological discussion of the Non-Christian religions and the salvation of Non-Christians, tracing the doctrine from the Scriptures and the Fathers down the centuries to 'current theological thinking.' Perhaps the Weakest point of the book is the discussion of contemporary theology. He discusses the theories of a subversive substitution of other religions by a Christianity of fulfilment, Rahner's theory of the anonymous Christians. The author's research seems to have been rather restricted to Catholic authors. Rahner, Congar, Schlette, Johanns, Dandoy, Hans Küng and others are discussed. But the author does not discuss the vital issues raised by W. C. Smith (*The Meaning and End of Religion*), J. M. Kitagawa (*Christianity and the Encounters of World Religions* (1963), *The Future of Religions* (1966), A. Th. Van Leeuwen (*Christianity in World History*. 1964) and others. Do we not miss the whole point of discussion with regard to Eastern religions when we start with a ready-made definition of religions that applies only to Western religions? Can you find a pure Non-Christian? Does not every one live in a "cumulative tradition?" Has not Christianity as a "religion" undergone radical transformation down the centuries owing to socio-political changes or should not the distinction be made clear between Christ and the Christian faith on the one hand and the visible socio-political structures of the Church on the other? Interestingly H. Kraemer is mentioned, but not Hocking who opposed him at the Tambaram Conference and who wrote a number of excellent books to show

the wider meaning of the Incarnation that embraces even other religions. With the deliberate omission of *Votum* except for the Catechumens, has not the Council been pointing at a cosmic economy of salvation of which the Church is only a part even though the most definitive and significant one?

The author's call for deeper reflection on the nature of the Church and "of its place in God's plan for the world" is very significant and should be taken up.

J. B. Chethimattam



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